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ABSTRACT

To assess the educational and employment experiences of youths after exposure to New York's Division for Youth (DFY) rehabilitation services, the incidence of criminal recidivism, and the extent to which program exposure (secure/noncommunity, or community-based) affects youths' post-program, criminal, educational, and employment experiences, 771 program participants were studied. Information was gathered on the youth's background characteristics, their criminal recidivism rates (incidence of arrests and convictions, and most serious arrest), and their educational achievement (high school degree or general equivalency degree--GED) after leaving DFY programs. Analysis of results showed that 51.8 percent of the youths were arrested after leaving DFY; of those, 78.4 percent were arrested for a felony. The overall conviction rate was 30.4 percent. Using periods of post-DFY employment as a measure of success, only 25.4 percent of the youths were never employed. A high school diploma or GED was obtained by 16 percent of the youths. Youths with similar background characteristics had similar post-program criminal, employment, and educational histories regardless of the type of program in which they had been placed. This finding indicates the need for evaluation of current policies to avoid continuation of a service model which the evidence suggests is not working. (MCF)

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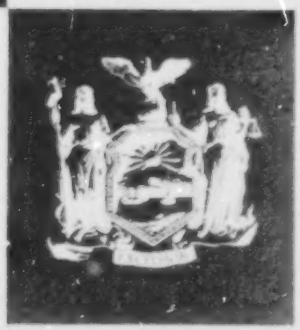
Impact of Youth Rehabilitation Programs



Research Report
October 1982

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was undertaken by LCER as part of an evaluation of the Division for Youth's (DFY) rehabilitative services program. An evaluation of rehabilitation operations is reported in a companion study titled, Management of Youth Rehabilitation Programs. The principal issues addressed in this study include:

--The incidence of criminal recidivism, and educational and employment experiences of youths after exposure to DFY residential rehabilitative services; and

--The extent to which the types of DFY program exposures (defined broadly as secure/non-community and community based) affect youths' post-program criminal, educational and employment experiences.

These issues were addressed by LCER in a study of 771 youths (including cohorts from community and non-community based facilities) with varied residential experiences within DFY's rehabilitative services program. Information was obtained from DFY and the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) of the youths' background characteristics, criminal history, (as of August 1981) post-DFY educational and employment experiences and current status (as of July 1981).

Standards of Success

LCER defined success as the incidence of post-DFY criminal recidivism and the extent of post-DFY employment and educational experiences.

Criminal Recidivism

Criminal recidivism, returning to criminal behavior after exposure to rehabilitative services, was measured on the basis of experiences after leaving DFY:

--The incidence of arrests,

--The most serious arrest (felony or misdemeanor), and

--The incidence of convictions.

Education

Educational achievement was measured by a youth having received a high school diploma or general equivalency degree (GED) after leaving DFY.

Employment

Employment achievements were measured by length of employment after leaving DFY.

Outcomes

Based on these standards, the following is a summary of LCER's research findings:

Recidivism

Using LCER's definition of recidivism, 51.8 percent of the 771 youths in the study

group were arrested after leaving DFY. Of those arrested, 78.4 percent were arrested for a felony. The overall conviction rate was 30.4 percent.

The recidivism rate for DFY youths (based on percent of youths arrested) is comparable to the recidivism rates for youths reported in similar studies in other states.

Employment and Education

Using periods of post-DFY employment as a measure of success, only 25.4 percent of the study group were never employed; 44.0 percent of the youths were employed for six months or less and 30.6 percent were employed for more than six months. As of July 1981, 46.2 percent of the study group was employed either full or part-time.

A high school diploma or general equivalency degree was obtained by 16 percent of the DFY study group.

Program Impact

Besides identifying overall rates of post-DFY criminal recidivism and employment and education success, LCER also used these outcome measures in relation to the different types of programs the youths were exposed to during their DFY residential care. Program exposure was defined in terms of varying types of stay in community and non-community based programs.

While controlling for a number of background variables significantly related to outcome (including sex, most serious prior offense, place of residence, year of birth, ethnicity, housing inhibits social development, age at DFY admission, and risk period) and using the outcome measures referenced earlier, the analysis of program exposure resulted in the following conclusions:

--Except for males with prior felonies, there is no significant difference in the post-DFY criminal history when DFY program exposure is used as a control. Males with prior felonies whose longest stay was in a secure facility were somewhat less likely to be arrested.

--Youths with prior felonies in residential centers and youths with no prior offenses in urban homes and residential centers were more likely to complete high school than other youths with comparable criminal history backgrounds.

--There is no significant relationship between DFY program exposure and a youth's post-DFY employment experience.

The most notable exception to LCER's analysis of outcome related to program exposure was for a group of youths who had prior felony arrests and were placed in secure facilities. This group (46 youths constituting 6.0 percent of the entire study group) had a lower incidence of arrests--39.1 percent--than youths with similar background characteristics who spent all of their time in an urban home or center. The latter group had a post-DFY arrest rate of 57.1 percent.

Conclusions

Any evaluation of programs for youth rehabilitation must take into account the success of the program in altering an individual's criminal and social behavior. Unfortunately, too few intervention programs are evaluated on this basis, and LCER knows of only one major DFY effort to evaluate its rehabilitation programs.

LCER's evaluation of DFY's rehabilitation program indicates that DFY's efforts have achieved about average results when compared with other recidivism studies. Furthermore, with the exceptions noted above, youths with similar background characteristics had similar post-program criminal, employment and educational histories regardless of the type of facility in which they were placed. This pattern raises serious questions concerning the effectiveness of DFY's facility level system. The viability of such a system is linked to DFY's efforts to

determine how well youths' needs are met by placing them in different types of facilities. The data available to LCER for this study suggest that for a significant segment of DFY's population this is not the case--i.e., program exposure by level generally does not affect post-program behavior. Any number of factors could account for this result. However, some obvious issues are raised by the data including:

--The appropriateness of DFY's placement decisions;

--The extent to which there are differences in program services at the facility levels so that different "types" of youths are receiving services to assist them in changing their behavior; and

--The effectiveness of the program changes within DFY in recent years with the shift from a community based to a more secure type of institutional program.

It is incumbent upon DFY to address these issues through an evaluation of programs and policies of the institutional level system established to deliver rehabilitation services to youths. Failure to do so will result in the continuation of a program model based on DFY's "best guess" of what changes youths' behavior. The weight of the evidence in this study suggests that the model is not working as intended.

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FOREWORD

The Legislative Commission on Expenditure Review was established by Chapter 176 of the Laws of 1969 as a permanent legislative agency for among other duties, "the purpose of determining whether any such department or agency has efficiently and effectively expended the funds appropriated by the Legislature for specific programs and whether such departments or agencies have failed to fulfill the legislative intent, purpose and authorization." This report, Impact of Youth Rehabilitation Programs, is the one-hundred and first staff report, and the second LCER Research Report.

The issues raised in this report include: (1) the incidence of criminal recidivism and educational and employment experiences of youths after exposure to DFY residential rehabilitation services; and (2) the extent to which the types of DFY program exposures (secure/non-community and community based) affect youths' post-program criminal, educational and employment experiences.

LCER's study of 771 youths with varied residential experiences within DFY's rehabilitation services program found that 51.8 percent of the youths were arrested and 30.4 percent were convicted of a crime after leaving DFY. This criminal recidivism rate is comparable to the recidivism rates for youths reported in similar studies in other states.

LCER also measured the rates of criminal recidivism and post-program educational and work experiences of the youths related to the type of program exposure during their DFY residential care. Program exposure was defined in terms of varying types of stay in community and non-community based programs. LCER found that, with the exception of males with prior felonies, there were no significant differences in youths' post-DFY criminal history when DFY program exposure is used as a control. This pattern was also generally the case for youths' post-DFY educational and employment experiences.

We note our appreciation for the cooperation extended to us by DFY staff.

A uniform procedure is followed. After the preliminary draft is completed, copies are delivered to the State agencies involved in carrying out the legislative policies under review. The reply is included in the Appendix along with an LCER rebuttal.

In accordance with LCER policy, this report focuses on factual analysis and evaluation. Recommendations and program proposals are not presented since they are in the realm of policymaking and therefore the prerogative of the Legislature.

This research was conducted by Gerald Keyes, Chairman, Michael McCarry and David Rowell. Dr. Kevin Wright, of the Center for Social Analysis, State University of New York at Binghamton, an authority on criminal recidivism, participated in the preparation of the study methodology and research analysis as a consultant to LCER. Bernard Geizer served as general editor, while James Haag handled layout and production. Word processing and graphic services were provided by Ann Careccia. Overall supervision was the responsibility of the Director.

The Commission is interested in hearing from the readers of its reports. Any comments or suggestions should be sent to the Director at the address listed on the inside front cover of the audit.

The law mandates that the Chairmanship of the Legislative Commission on Expenditure Review alternate in successive years between the Chairman, Senate Finance Committee and the Chairman, Assembly Ways and Means Committee. Assemblyman Arthur J. Kremer is Chairman for 1982 and Senator John J. Marchi is Vice Chairman.

October 29, 1982

Sanford E. Russell
Director

I BACKGROUND

As referenced in LCER's program audit titled, Management of Youth Rehabilitation Programs, measures of youths' post program experiences are an important aspect of evaluating youth rehabilitative services. Ultimately, the test of effectiveness of rehabilitation is whether the intervention techniques to which the youth is exposed reduce his criminal behavior and aid him in achieving acceptable societal goals.

This aspect of LCER's audit of DFY's rehabilitative services program focused on the following dimensions in a study of 771 youths after leaving DFY residential care:

--Measuring the incidence of recidivism--the rate at which youths return to criminal behavior--after leaving DFY; and

--The extent to which the post-DFY experiences were affected by the types of programs to which youths were exposed while in DFY residential care.

This chapter provides background information concerning the study methodology, characteristics of youths included in the study and general measures of youths' post program experiences.

Methodology

A detailed discussion of the study methodology is contained in Appendix A. There are a number of factors that need to be considered in any study designed to measure recidivism. The most important ones are the appropriate definition, the time period after release from a rehabilitation program to which measures of recidivism are applied and the need to compare youths with similar background characteristics. These issues are discussed in Chapter II. Each of these issues was dealt with in this study to ensure that the data analysis was not flawed. A summary of the methodology and the manner in which these issues were resolved for this study are presented here.

Study Group

Two groups (referred to as cohorts*) were selected for the study. The following criteria were used for selecting the two groups:

1. The first cohort consisted of the entire population (521) of youths admitted (whether a new admission, a transfer, or a readmission after discharge) to DFY secure and other non-community based facilities during July-December 1978.

2. The second cohort consisted of the entire population (250) of youths released to aftercare or discharged from DFY community based facilities during January-June 1979.

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*A cohort differs from a sample in that a cohort selects all participants in a given time period while a sample selects a portion of the participants.

A minimum of 30 days residence in a DFY facility was required for a youth to be included in the study group. For purposes of analysis of program impact (Chapter III), the two cohorts were considered together.

Data Collection

LCER obtained data (see Appendices A and B) from three sources to conduct this study:

--DFY Analysis File--Background information maintained by DFY on each youth admitted to its residential programs including the youth's admission history;

--Current Employment and Education Status--Information obtained from Youth Service Teams (YSTs) through LCER survey forms; and

--Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS)--Juvenile and adult criminal history records.

Background Data. LCER staff utilized DFY's computer files to obtain demographic data (age, race, sex, residence, religion, etc.) and information on education, employment, family and relatives, a behavior profile and other data. These data were used as controls (where they were found related to outcome) in the analysis. This means that the analysis took into account variations in youths' background (e.g., sex, most serious prior offense, etc.) where such background variables were significantly related to outcomes. The list of variables selected is contained in Appendix C.

DFY Admission History. DFY also records information on the number, length, and type of stays in and absences from DFY programs. The computer file contains up to 17 DFY stays for a youth. The format of this information has little utility for analysis. Consequently, LCER devised a synopsis of this file to summarize (see Appendix A) each youth's program experience in DFY defined in terms of the following:

--First facility at time of admission;

--Length of time and number of stays in community and non-community based facilities;

--Facility of longest stay;

--Length and number of DFY placements; and

--Facility at time of discharge to aftercare.

The summary was used to determine the types of DFY program exposure for the youths included in LCER's study.

Post-DFY Educational and Employment Record. LCER staff surveyed the YSTs assigned to the youth to gather information on the youth's educational and employment histories since leaving DFY. This survey included questions concerning the youth's current residence and his post-DFY educational and employment experience. These data, combined with the criminal history information discussed below, constitute the outcome measures on the youth's post-DFY behavior.

Criminal History Record. DCJS collects information on arrests, dispositions, sentences, and data from law enforcement, judicial, and State and local correctional agencies. DCJS provides local police departments with criminal histories on adults and juveniles arrested--usually based on fingerprints. Information retained by DCJS on juvenile criminal histories is limited to youths arrested for certain serious felony offenses. The division provided LCER staff with the criminal histories of youths in the LCER sample. DCJS used demographic information provided by LCER to search its criminal history data base and provided LCER with criminal histories where there was a match.

LCER maintained the confidentiality of the criminal history records provided by DCJS by recoding all data files in the study.

Profile of the Cohorts

This section provides a summary of the four types of data discussed above for both the community and non-community based cohorts and includes a profile of youths in LCER's study group. One of the issues addressed in this section of the report is the overall incidence of recidivism for youths in other programs. It would be difficult to evaluate DFY's success in "reducing" the incidence of criminal behavior in the absence of comparative data. LCER did obtain data on recidivism from other programs by reviewing the literature. These comparative data are presented in Chapter II. The remainder of this chapter describes the background characteristics, admission history, and post-DFY behavior of the study group without controlling for program exposure. That control is done in Chapter III.

Youths' Background

Table 1 summarizes the important background characteristics of the two cohorts in LCER's study group.

Combined Population. The combined population is close to four-fifths male. Blacks constitute 45.3 percent, whites 40.1 percent of the group and Puerto Ricans 12.2 percent. Approximately 40 percent of the youths lived in households where the mother was the only parent. Public assistance was the primary source of income for 42.2 percent of the population. Place of residence was evenly divided between upstate counties and New York City and its environs: 50.1 percent of the youths were from upstate areas; 37.5 percent were from New York City; and 12.5 percent were residents of the New York City suburbs.

The delinquent behavior of the youths is reflected in their pre-DFY criminal justice contacts, designations, and school status. Highlights of this background include:

--88.6 percent of the youths had prior court contacts;

--62.8 percent of the youths had prior placements;

--55.1 percent of the youths were adjudicated as juvenile delinquents, 6.0 percent as youthful offenders, and 17.4 percent were referred to DFY as Persons in Need of Supervision;

--40.8 percent of the youths were attending school full-time.

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Table 1

Selected Background Characteristics for DFY Study Group

Characteristic	Community Based Cohort Percent	Community Based Cohort Base *	Non-community Based Cohort Percent	Non-community Based Cohort Base *	Total Percent	Total Base *
Sex		(248)		(521)		(769)
Male	62.9		85.6		78.3	
Female	37.1		14.4		21.7	
	100.0		100.0		100.0	
Ethnicity		(249)		(521)		(770)
Black	42.6		46.6		45.3	
White	42.2		39.2		40.1	
Puerto Rican	11.6		12.5		12.2	
Other	3.6		1.7		2.4	
	100.0		100.0		100.0	
Usual Family Head		(111)		(304)		(415)
Mother and Father	44.3		44.7		44.6	
Mother Only	36.9		41.4		40.2	
Other	18.8		13.9		15.2	
	100.0		100.0		100.0	
Referred by		(250)		(521)		(771)
Family Court	71.6		89.4		83.7	
Self or Parent	11.2		2.9		5.6	
Other	17.2		7.7		10.7	
	100.0		100.0		100.0	
Place of Residence		(250)		(521)		(771)
New York City	34.8		38.8		37.5	
New York City Suburbs	7.6		14.8		12.5	
Upstate	57.6		46.4		50.1	
	100.0		100.0		100.1	
Current Adjudication at Admission		(250)		(521)		(771)
Juvenile Delinquent	30.8		66.8		55.1	
Person in Need of Supervision	32.8		10.0		17.4	
Youthful Offender	4.4		6.7		6.0	
None	26.8		8.8		14.7	
Other	5.2		7.7		6.8	
	100.0		100.0		100.0	
Most Serious Prior Offense		(250)		(521)		(771)
No Prior Offense	70.8		27.8		41.8	
Misdemeanor	15.2		28.4		24.1	
Felony	14.0		43.8		34.1	
	100.0		100.0		100.0	
Primary Income Source		(109)		(301)		(410)
Public Assistance	34.9		44.9		42.2	
Wages	56.9		44.9		48.0	
Other, Unknown	8.2		10.2		9.8	
	100.0		100.0		100.0	
School Status-Pre-DFY		(106)		(298)		(404)
Full Time	49.1		37.9		40.8	
Not Attending Regularly	32.1		41.9		39.4	
Dropout	9.4		12.1		11.4	
Suspended	6.6		6.7		6.7	
Night or Part Time	2.8		1.3		1.7	
	100.0		99.9		100.0	
Employment Status-Pre-DFY						
Not Employed-		(102)		(299)		(401)
Not Looking	71.6		85.6		82.0	
Not Employed-Looking	17.6		8.7		9.5	
Employed Full or Part Time	10.8		7.7		8.5	
	100.0		100.0		100.0	
Prior Court Contact	78.4	(102)	92.2	(294)	88.6	(396)
Prior Placements	50.5	(91)	66.8	(277)	62.8	(368)
Substance Abuse Problems	42.2	(102)	43.6	(296)	43.2	(398)

*Differences in base numbers reflect availability of data for each variable.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

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Contrasts Between the Cohorts. Important differences between the two groups include:

--Males and blacks constitute a larger proportion of the non-community based cohort (85.6 percent and 46.6 percent, respectively) than of the community based cohort (62.9 percent and 42.6 percent, respectively);

--A higher proportion of the non-community based youths were not attending school full-time; more were referred from the Family Court; and a considerably higher proportion had prior court contacts and prior placements;

--A larger proportion of the non-community based cohort was referred to DFY as juvenile delinquents (66.8 percent) compared to the community based cohort (30.8 percent);

--32.8 percent of the admissions to community based programs are Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS); 10 percent of the admissions to non-community based programs are PINS;

--26.8 percent of the admissions to community based programs have no adjudication status; 8.8 percent of the youths admitted to non-community based programs have no adjudication status;

--70.8 percent of all admissions to community based programs, as contrasted with only 27.8 percent of all admissions to non-community based programs, had no offense prior to admission;

--28.4 percent of all admissions to non-community based facilities, compared to 15.2 percent of all admissions to community based facilities, had committed a misdemeanor prior to admission; and

--43.8 percent of all admissions to non-community based programs, as contrasted to 14.0 percent of all admissions to community based programs, had committed a felony prior to admission.

Youths' Admission History

The youths in the two cohorts had different DFY admission histories. Admission histories (as defined earlier) are summarized in Table 2. The major contrasts between the two cohorts include the following:

--17.1 percent of the non-community based cohort had more than one DFY placement compared to 10.0 percent of the community based cohort,

--88.0 percent of the community based youths were first placed in a Youth Development Center (YDC) or Urban Home compared to only 13.5 percent of the non-community based group,

--39.2 percent of the non-community based cohort had one or more community based stays; 24.4 percent of community based youths had one or more non-community based stays, and

Table 2

Selected Variables on Youth Admission History for DFY Study Group

Item	Percent of Community Based Cohort (250)[a]	Percent of Non-community Based Cohort (521)[a]	Percent of Total (771)[a]
More than one DFY Placement	10.0	17.1	14.8
First Facility - Youth Development Center or Urban Home[b]	88.0	13.5	37.6
More than one facility stay	32.0	63.1	53.0
One or more non-community facility stays	24.4	98.7[c]	74.6
One or more community facility stays	97.5[c]	39.2	57.8
One or more facility stays under 30 days	11.6	28.0	22.7

[a]Number used for calculating percentages.
[b]Based on placement in which youths were sampled.
[c]Some members of the two cohorts were admitted or released within the time frame to qualify for the cohort but did not stay 30 days in a facility of that cohort. They subsequently had a minimum stay of 30 days in a facility of the other cohort to qualify for inclusion in the study group.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

--32.0 percent of the community based cohort compared to 63.1 percent of the non-community based group had more than one DFY facility stay.

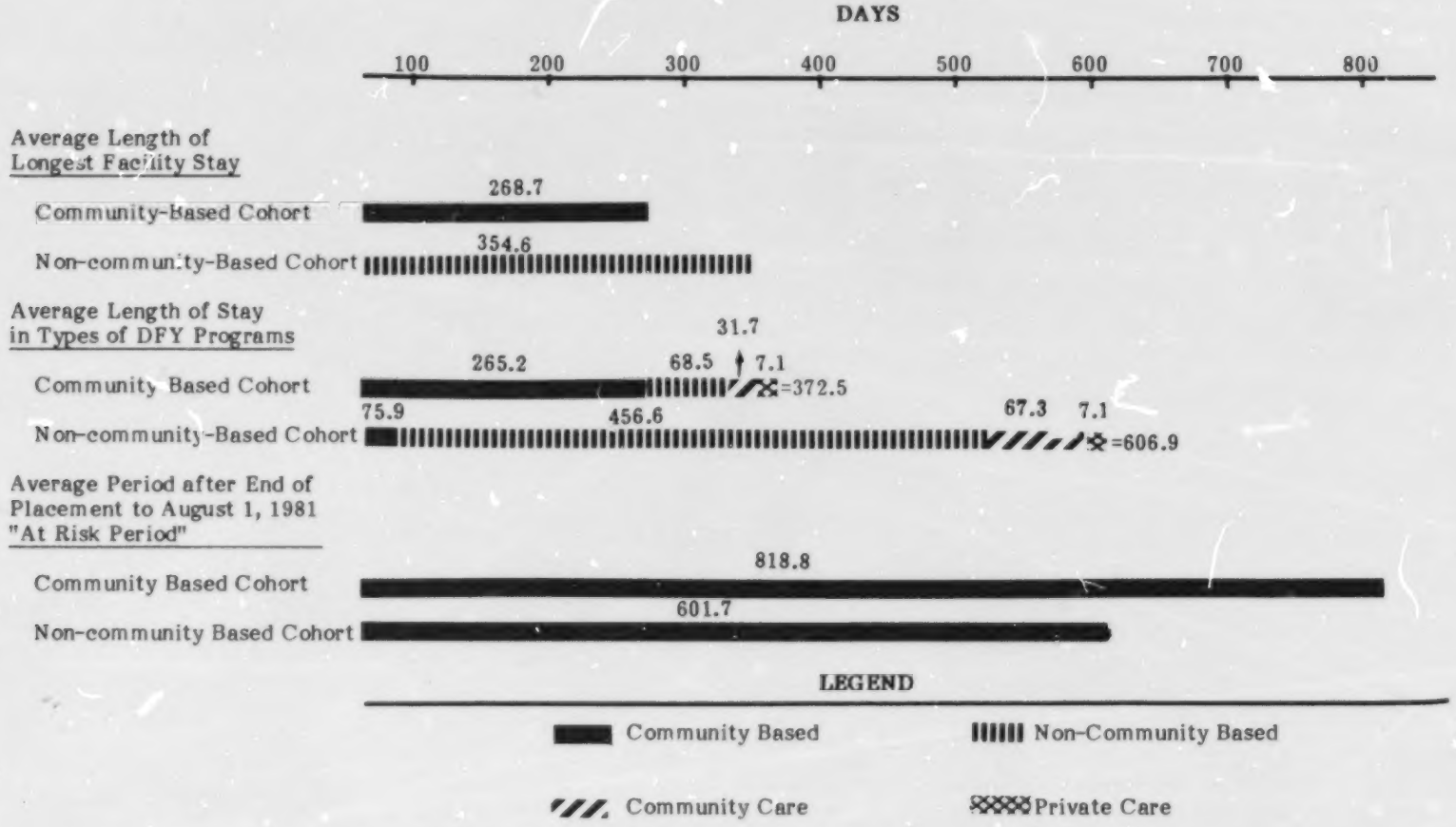
Chart 1 reflects the difference between the two cohorts relative to average length of time in community and non-community based facilities and periods "at risk." This shows:

--The community based cohort was in a community based facility for close to nine months (268.7 days) as the longest facility stay whereas youths in the non-community based cohort spent close to one year in a non-community based facility (354.6 days) as the longest facility stay;

--Youths in the non-community based cohort were, on average, in DFY residential care (including all placements) for 234.4 days more than the youths in the community based cohort;

Chart 1

Summary of Youth Admission History by Length of Stay and at Risk Period for DFY Follow-up Study Group[a]



[a]Average length of longest facility stay and average length of stay in types of DFY program include all DFY placements up to and including placement sampled.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

--The non-community based cohort was "at risk" approximately seven months less than the youths in the community based cohort.

The non-community based cohort spent approximately 20 months in DFY care during the time ending with the completion of the placement in which the youth was selected compared to about 12 months for the community based group. The two cohorts each spent about 70 percent of their placements in the type of facility (non-community or community based) from which they were sampled. The amount of time spent in private care or community care (aftercare, independent living, or foster care) in Chart 1 is lower than actual experience because of the placement definition used by LCER (see Appendix A).

Post-DFY Experiences

A summary of the experiences of the two cohorts after leaving DFY care (from the placement selected for LCER's study) is presented below. This summary includes current status, education and employment as well as criminal justice experience.

Post-DFY Education and Employment

Table 3 presents a summary of the post-DFY education and employment experience of the cohorts based on the YST survey. Important differences between the two groups in education and employment experiences include:

--19.1 percent of the youths in the community based group received either a high school diploma or general equivalency degree (GED) compared to only 15.0 percent of the non-community based youths;

--A higher proportion (45.3 percent) of the non-community based youths did not attend school compared to the community based youths (31.1 percent); and

--A higher proportion of the community based cohort (53.3 percent) were employed at the time of the survey compared to 43.8 percent of the non-community based youths. A higher proportion of the community based youths also was employed for over six months (38.1 percent) than non-community based youths (28.0 percent).

Criminal History Record

Table 4 presents information on the post-DFY combined adult and juvenile criminal history of the two cohorts. This history is almost exclusively adult arrests, charges, and convictions since almost all youths were 16 years of age prior to DFY release and, thus would be charged as adults on subsequent arrests.

Table 4 indicates that 51.8 percent of the population was rearrested after they left DFY. Forty-five percent of those rearrested were arrested within six months of leaving DFY. About one-sixth were convicted of a misdemeanor and ten percent were convicted of felonies. In some cases, LCER staff found evidence of convictions on the criminal history record (e.g., dates of admission to prison, and sentencing data) but no information on the type of conviction. These were classified as "unspecified convictions." About 11 percent of the sample had one or more unspecified convictions. The most serious adult

Table 3

Post-DFY Education, Employment, and Residence History of DFY Study Group August 1981

Item	Community Based Cohort Percent	Base*	Non-community Based Cohort Percent	Base*	Total Percent	Base*
Current Residence		(143)		(395)		(538)
Family	49.7		48.9		49.1	
Friends	8.4		3.8		5.0	
Independent	19.6		10.1		12.6	
Jail	11.2		19.7		17.5	
DFY Residential	1.4		8.9		6.9	
Other	9.7		8.6		8.9	
	100.0		100.0		100.0	
Community School - Beginning Grade		(164)		(406)		(570)
Did Not Attend	31.1		45.3		41.2	
Less than Ninth	14.1		10.6		11.7	
Ninth or Tenth Grade	41.4		32.8		35.2	
Above Tenth Grade	11.0		7.9		8.8	
Ungraded and Other	2.4		3.4		3.1	
	100.0		100.0		100.0	
Community School - Grade Completed[a]		(74)		(154)		(228)
Ninth	13.5		31.8		25.5	
Tenth	31.1		31.8		31.2	
Eleventh	28.4		16.2		19.9	
Twelfth or Higher	13.5		14.3		13.9	
Less than Ninth	13.5		5.9		9.5	
	100.0		100.0		100.0	
Received High School Diploma or GED						
Yes	19.1	(115)	15.0	(380)	16.0	(495)
No	80.9		85.0		84.0	
	100.0		100.0		100.0	
Post DFY Employment Period		(105)		(293)		(398)
Never Employed	26.7		24.9		25.4	
Six or Less Months	35.2		47.1		44.0	
More than Six Months	38.1		28.0		30.6	
	100.0		100.0		100.0	
Currently Employed Full or Part Time						
Yes	53.3	(75)	43.8	(215)	46.2	(290)
No	46.7		56.2		53.8	
	100.0		100.0		100.0	

*Differences in base number reflect availability of data for each variable.

[a]Percentages based on youth reported completing a grade exclude ungraded or those not attending.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

Table 4

Post-DFY Criminal History Record of
DFY Study Group

Item	Community Based Cohort		Non-community Based Cohort		Total	
	Percent	Base[a]	Percent	Base[a]	Percent	Base[a]
Arrested	49.2	(250)	53.0	(521)	51.8	(771)
Convicted	25.2	(250)	33.2	(521)	30.4	(771)
Felony Convictions	10.0	(250)	10.9	(521)	10.6	(771)
Misdemeanor Convictions	16.0		16.9		16.6	
Unspecified Convictions[b]	7.2		12.3		10.6	
Felony Most Serious Arrest[c]	72.7	(121)	81.0	(273)	78.4	(394)
Felony Most Serious Conviction[c]	52.1	(48)	48.4	(126)	49.4	(174)
Arrested in First Six Months[c]	36.9	(122)	49.1	(273)	45.3	(395)
	Number		Number		Number	
Average Arrests	1.39	(250)	1.57	(521)	1.50	(771)
Average Convictions	.47		.57		.54	
Average Felony Convictions	.12		.14		.13	
Average Misdemeanor Convictions	.26		.31		.29	
Average Unspecified Convictions[c]	.08		.13		.12	

[a] Differences in base number reflect availability of data for each variable.
[b] Convictions without information on whether a felony or misdemeanor.
[c] Based upon those who were arrested or convicted.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

arrest was a felony for 78.4 percent of the youths arrested. Approximately half of those convicted were convicted of a felony.

There are some distinctions between the community and non-community criminal history records presented in Table 4. The non-community based cohort had slightly more arrests. Among those arrested, almost half of the non-community based group compared to approximately 37 percent of the community based group were arrested in the first six months after leaving DFY. The most serious arrest for the non-community based group was more frequently a felony (81.0 percent to 72.7 percent). Misdemeanor and felony conviction records were similar for both groups though the non-community based group had more unspecified convictions (12.3 percent to 7.2 percent).

Overall, the two cohorts have similar arrest and conviction records though the non-community based group was rearrested more quickly following release from a DFY facility. However, this analysis does not control for the fact that the non-community based cohort had an "at-risk" period seven months less than the community based group and, therefore, had less opportunity to be arrested and/or convicted.

Report Scope

The scope of this report includes:

--Review of the education, employment and criminal histories of youths subsequent to their release from DFY care during the placement used by LCER for this study.

--Review of the literature on the impact of residential treatment programs on juveniles' subsequent recidivism rates. This includes a discussion of the different methodologies, recidivism definitions and the conclusions reached by researchers. The results of the LCER study are compared to other studies.

--Analyses of the relationships between youths' DFY admission histories and education, employment, and criminal activity outcome measures while comparing groups of youths with similar background characteristics significantly related to the outcome measures. Background variables strongly related to the outcome measures were reviewed. After the controls were added, the relative success or failure of youths with different DFY admission histories was compared.

Chapter Summary

● LCER's study group is almost four-fifths male, and evenly split between blacks and whites with a sizable group of Puerto Ricans. Over 80 percent had court contacts before entering DFY care and over one-half were adjudicated juvenile delinquents. Less than half were attending school full time prior to being placed with DFY.

● The non-community based cohort stayed approximately eight months longer in DFY care than the community based cohort and was "at risk" seven fewer months. The non-community based cohort had a greater proportion of multiple facility stays and their average longest stay in a facility was longer than the community based group.

● After leaving DFY care, 16 percent of LCER's study group received a high school diploma or a GED and approximately three-quarters had some employment experience.

● About one-half of the youths were arrested and approximately 30 percent were convicted after leaving DFY. Of those arrested, almost four-fifths were charged with felonies. Slightly less than one-half of those arrested were picked up within six months after leaving DFY care.

II DEFINITIONS OF RECIDIVISM AND MEASURES OF OUTCOME

Recidivism means returning to a previous way. In the case of criminal recidivism, the person relapses into crime, typically after a specific period of intervention resulting from adjudication for some previous offense. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss issues related to recidivism to:

--Highlight the methodological issues that must be taken into account for both an understanding of the study approach and interpretation of the results; and

--Provide a summary of other studies comparable to that undertaken by LCER.

Cautions Regarding Methodology

There is a tendency to oversimplify the results of any study utilizing measures of recidivism. Interpretation of data can be misleading if the methodology used to collect and analyze the data is not understood. This can be illustrated by reference to data abstracted from the American Correctional Association's (ACA) publication, Juvenile and Adult Correctional Departments, Institutions, Agencies and Paroling Authorities.[1] Among the 26 states reporting, Rhode Island showed the highest youth recidivism rate, 65.5 percent, based on a 1972 study. Texas reported, in contrast, a rate of 8.8 percent. Nine other states reported rates from 10-19 percent; nine reported rates from 20-29 percent; and six states reported rates from 30-39 percent. If the rates are taken at face value, it would appear that there are significant differences in recidivism among the states. However, the recidivism rates in the states are probably quite similar. The differences are the result of how recidivism is defined and measured. To identify statistics comparable to LCER's study, several methodological issues must first be considered.

Technically, the commission of any criminal offense subsequent to release from incarceration (of any type) would make one a recidivist. However, recidivism is defined by the criteria used in a given study, and these criteria vary considerably.

Alternative Definitions

Most often, rearrest, reconviction, and reinstitutionalization are used to define recidivism. Each has its advantages and disadvantages.

In considering subjects who are rearrested as recidivists, all of those accused of new crimes may not be guilty. This problem is avoided by focusing on those convicted of a new offense; in this case, those subjects who were guilty but not convicted are lost. By relying on arrest and conviction data, one also may misclassify as non-recidivists subjects who are on parole and commit new offenses but are never officially processed for that offense and simply return to an institution on a technical revocation. This problem is avoided by defining recidivism as reinstitutionalization but is confounded by the fact that some reinstitutionalizations result from true technical violations of the conditions of parole or aftercare and do not represent new offenses. Furthermore, reinstitutionalization fails to include offenders who are not convicted and reincarcerated. Thus, each of

the three definitions commonly used has limitations as well as assets. For purposes of comparing two or more program options, the limitations of each definition to a major extent are irrelevant because errors in the measure that is applied should be equal for all programs. What each of the three definitions fails to provide is a true estimate of reoffense; each will be deflated to the extent that some offenses will go unnoticed, because, in all three cases, no information about unknown offenses is obtained. In reviewing the manner in which recidivism is defined, a few (somewhat misguided) studies estimate the rate of recidivism as the proportion of those individuals currently incarcerated who have previously been arrested, convicted, or incarcerated. These rates, which tend to be high (80 to 90 percent) tell us something about the institutional population but fail to provide information concerning the population that is not returned to an institution.

Periods of "At Risk"

In addition to the definition selected, a second methodological problem which confuses recidivism findings is the length of follow-up--often referred to as the period "at risk." Technically, recidivism occurs if a person commits a new offense any time during his or her lifetime, yet researchers and program administrators seldom can wait that long for feedback about program outcomes. For this reason, a specific time period is selected in which subjects will be studied. If an individual is rearrested, reconvicted or reincarcerated during that period, depending on the definition selected, he or she will be considered a recidivist. This aspect of recidivism measurement precludes the comparison of two studies if their follow-up periods are not similar. In a study in which the subjects are "at-risk" for a longer period of time, some new offenses may occur during the latter portion of the study period in which measurements are not taken by the other study. Therefore, a program with a longer follow-up period would be expected to result in a higher recidivism rate.

This problem is not as critical as it might seem because the frequency distribution of recidivism over time resembles a learning curve. The highest incidence of recidivism occurs within the first few months after release and tapers off steadily for the next few years. Practically all returns to crime occur in the first two or three years. If the individual was not rearrested during that time there is an extremely high probability that the person will not be rearrested. For this reason, results from studies with tracking periods of two or more years are fairly comparable. Trouble occurs when comparisons are made between a study which monitors clients for six months following their release to a study using a two-year follow-up period.

Group Comparability

A methodological problem which affects the comparability of recidivism findings is the lack of similarity among the groups selected for study. For a long time penal experts have recognized that individuals have different chances of reoffense because of their personal histories; each person has a propensity for criminal behavior which is determined by his/her background. For this reason, certain types of individuals, irrespective of the type of intervention they receive, pose a higher risk of recidivism than others. Recognizing this fact, judges, institutional administrators, and treatment staff often try to assign clients to program types and levels based on the risk posed. An attempt is made to assign high risk children to institutions and programs which are the most secure and/or are

considered to be the most beneficial. Similar decisions also are made on behalf of children at other risk levels. To the extent that such assignment patterns are successful in distinguishing among different risk levels, a given program may have a very different type of client from another program. For this reason, it may not be possible to compare the recidivism rate of facility A with that of facility B because the clients of A might be more likely to recidivate than those of B. Thus, if one hopes to evaluate the success of a particular program by comparison with other programs, care must be given to the selection of studies which have similar types of clients.

Review of Comparable Recidivism Studies

Since recidivism is such a critical aspect of correctional outcome and the accomplishment of the system's mission, it is reasonable to expect that each state would carefully record its success in accomplishing that goal. Yet, such is not the case; there are relatively few studies directly comparable to that undertaken by LCER. To compare the findings of this study to other similar studies, several recent and methodologically comparable studies have been identified by reviewing the penology literature. A summary of the findings from these studies follows.

Rate of Recidivism

The rate of reinstitutionalization seems to hover around 50 percent. This conclusion is supported by two juvenile justice authorities, Clemens Bartollas and Stuart J. Miller, who report in their book, The Juvenile Offender, "several studies concluded that about 50 percent of all youthful parolees will return to institutions."[2] The rate of rearrest for juveniles released from official custody also tends to be around 50 percent. To a certain extent this percentage depends upon the types of arrests that are included: misdemeanors and felonies or just felonies. The rate of reconviction tends to be somewhat lower than 50 percent--falling between 30 and 40 percent of the releases. These arrest and conviction rates are similiar to those reported for the DFY study group as noted in Chapter I.

Program Type and Recidivism

Another conclusion which can be drawn from the literature is that less restrictive custody does not increase recidivism and may actually reduce it. A survey of correctional evaluations by Lipton, Martinson and Wilks generally supports this conclusion. In comparing studies of alternative forms of supervision, the researchers found some evidence that programs involving less restrictive custody, minimal supervision, and early release were more effective and almost always less costly.[3] For this reason, it was concluded "that if we cannot do more for (and to) offenders, at least we can safely do less."[4]

To develop good comparative base statistics for the LCER's study, a few specific studies were examined. Possibly the most ambitious evaluation of juvenile outcomes was conducted in conjunction with the deinstitutionalization of juvenile offenders in Massachusetts. Coates, Miller, and Ohlin undertook a number of different studies of the experience--several of which focused on differences of outcome in the new community based and old institutional systems.[5] They provided the following breakdown of recidivism with a one-year follow-up period by program type:[6]

Type of Program	Number of Recidivists	Reappearance in Court %	Probation or Recommitment %
Non-residential	56	70	45
Foster care	63	49	41
Forestry	93	70	50
Group homes	125	62	46
Boarding schools	17	59	53
Secure care	67	82	67
Jail	7	86	71
No initial program	31	84	55

Failure rates were found to be relatively high. Reappearance, which is basically the same as rearrest, ranged from 49 to 86 percent with 41 to 71 percent of the children receiving a new sentence. The highest recidivism rates were associated with jail and secure care. The lowest rates were for youths supervised under non-residential care, foster care and group homes.

Coates, Miller and Ohlin also compared the juveniles processed under the old (institutional) system with those processed in the deinstitutionalized system. Overall, only a slight increase in the recidivism rate by either definition (reappearance in court or probation or recommitment) was noted for a sample released under the new system in 1974 from one with releases in 1968. Specifically, 66 percent of the 236 clients in the 1968 sample reappeared in court compared to 74 percent of the 395 clients in the 1974 sample. The percentage of the samples receiving a sentence of probation or recommitment was 47 for the 1968 group and 55 for the 1974 group. Regional differences in rate changes were found throughout the state with significant reductions in recidivism occurring in regions that "implemented the range of new programs most aggressively."[7] These findings led Coates, Miller and Ohlin to conclude:

> In the newer system, since around 80 percent of the youth are in relatively open settings with relatively low recidivism rates, the policy implication is clear: it is possible to put the majority of youth in open settings without exposing the community to inordinate danger. This policy implication holds regardless of whether the selections are due to selection or program effect.[8]

Caution should be used in drawing conclusions about differential effectiveness from the above studies since the researchers did not control for the relative seriousness of offenders processed through the different programs. One is on much firmer ground in comparing similar programs to each of these separate program types. Another study, which has received considerable attention recently, considered alternative programs operated by United Delinquency Intervention Services (UDIS) in Chicago and controlled for the youths' criminal background. UDIS is a large multi-service program consisting of various individual, private residential and non-residential components which serves as a community-based alternative to incarceration for serious juvenile offenders. The program, which was initiated in 1974, receives young offenders with extensive criminal histories through court referrals. After an extensive background and aptitude investigation, each child is placed in one or more programs. Some juveniles are serviced in residential centers while others are served by non-residential programs. The programmatic activities vary considerably and are tailored to the needs of each individual.[9]

The American Institute for Research conducted a large-scale outcome evaluation on the arrest rates of juveniles processed through existing Illinois juvenile institutions. The percentage of juveniles in each group who were rearrested was relatively high: 64.9 percent of the UDIS sample were rearrested within one year after completing the program while 69.7 percent of the juveniles released from state institutions were rearrested. However, the total amount of criminal activity by the two groups combined after release showed a marked decrease from the year preceding intervention. The total number of arrests decreased by 67.8 percent, the number of court appearances decreased by 64.4 percent, and the number of violence-related offenses dropped by 73.7 percent. These findings led the evaluators to conclude that both forms of intervention "had a powerful and apparently long-term inhibiting effect on subsequent delinquent activity."[10] The daily cost of servicing offenders in the community was found to be somewhat lower than incarcerating the young person in a state institution.[11]

Two evaluations somewhat dated but methodologically similar to the LCER study were conducted of the Silverlake project in California and the Pinehills project in Provo, Utah by Lamar T. Empey. The Silverlake project was a community-based residential program which featured milieu (environmental) therapy involving guided group interaction and group training for youths with a history of recidivism. When compared to a private open institution with a limited custodial emphasis, the rate of rearrest during the first year after release was found to be basically the same. More than 70 percent of the Silverlake boys and more than 80 percent of the control group boys had no arrests during the study period. The cost of the Silverlake community program was found to be substantially lower--about one-third of the cost of private institutionalization.[12]

The Pinehills project utilized a milieu therapy consisting of a supervised work program and guided group interaction in a nonresidential situation (often referred to as the Provo program). The participants were 15 to 17 year old offenders who were randomly assigned to the program upon conviction. Others were assigned to either probation or the state institution for youths thus creating an experimental design for the evaluators. Sixteen percent of the Pinehill youths who successfully completed the program were arrested within the first six months after release while 23 percent of the probation controls and 58 percent of the institutional controls were rearrested. The Pinehills project was also found to be significantly less expensive than incarceration but slightly more costly than regular probation.[13]

One important aspect of Empey's research requires further consideration. The recidivism rates for both projects were somewhat lower than for the more recent studies discussed first. In the Pinehills case, a shorter follow-up period was used which would explain some of the differences. However, in both cases, those youths who did not successfully complete the programs and were incarcerated were not included in the follow-up study. For this reason, many youngsters who would have probably encountered problems upon release were "selected out" before the follow-up study. The actual success/failure rates of the two projects should, therefore, not be directly compared to other programs which do process some clients out of the program.

A final study, which is important for comparative purposes, is an inhouse evaluation of the NYS Division for Youth.[14] A sample of 392 youth who were "at-risk" for approximately eight to 12 months prior to September 30, 1979 was used in the study. According to the project report "only 12% (n=9) of the females had any kind of arrest, and only one-third of those who were arrested (3 of 9) were for felonies. Forty-six percent of the males, on the other hand, had been arrested, and among those who had been arrested, three-fourths of the arrests were for felony offenses."[15] The rate for males,

given the slightly shorter follow-up period, is consistent with the findings of the studies discussed above.

To evaluate the effect of different program options, the sample was further limited in the DFY study. Males who were released from residential programs after less than a nine-month stay and who were "at-risk" for at least five months were included (n=148). According to the report, "differences among the arrest rates for youngsters serviced in Non-Community Based, Community-Based and Foster Care/Alternative Residential programs were minimal, the rates for each averaging around 17 percent."[16] Note the similarity of these findings to those Empey reported for the Silverlake and Pinehills projects. By restricting the follow-up period and selecting-out certain probable failures, the recidivism rate drops to approximately one-half its rate for an average cohort which is at risk one year. The report went on to consider the effect of movement patterns on future arrests and concluded that "youngsters who experienced transitional patterns were the least likely to have been arrested (14 percent) while those experiencing Incremental and Straight patterns were the most likely (67 percent and 33 percent, respectively)."[17]

Recidivism Reports of Selected States

As a second source of comparative outcome information, state juvenile corrections offices were contacted by letter requesting information about the recidivism rates of their clients who had been adjudicated delinquent. Correctional officials were contacted and requested to provide any information which distinguished between the outcomes for secure facilities and non-secure community programs, as well as some indication of how the statistics were obtained (i.e., operational definitions, methodology, etc). The agencies of 13 states were contacted, yet only six responded to the query for data.

Three of the states that responded, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New Hampshire, were unable to provide any recidivism information. A fourth, Vermont, provided a rate in which recidivism was defined as the percentage of the institutional populations which had been adjudicated delinquent. As noted above, such information tells us more about the characteristics of the institutional population than the outcome of particular programs. Thus, only two states provided usable information.

According to a letter from the Chief of the Division of Research, Keith A. Griffiths, and several attached reports, the recidivism rate for wards of the California Youth Authority has consistently remained around 45 percent. The definition of recidivism used by California is reinstitutionalization for a violation of parole or a recommitment or conviction of an adult crime resulting in probation, a lengthy jail sentence or incarceration in an adult prison. This definition of failure is somewhat different from that of this study. Rates using the California definition should be expected to be slightly lower than the definition of this study since the label of recidivist is not applied until an additional step in criminal processing is taken, conviction rather than arrest.

In general, California has two different types of facilities: institutions and camps. Those released from non-secure "camps" recidivate less than those released from the more secure institutions. However, according to Dr. Griffiths, these differences are attributable to the differences in risk of the clients of each program.

The State of Florida also provided information about the recidivism rate of its clients. Using the same definition of reinstitutionalization as California's, Florida reports a comparable rate for its secure training schools, 42.3 percent. Less secure, community-level residential programs were found to have recidivism rates that vary between

23.6 percent and 54.5 percent with an average rate of about 40 to 45 percent. Non-residential community programs reported recidivism rates between 21 and 33 percent. However, these lower statistics may result from different client risk levels.

Conclusion

Any effort to measure rates of recidivism and evaluate post-program experiences of youths in relation to the types of program services received must include appropriate definitions of recidivism and take into account differences in youths' background characteristics as well as the length of time such youths are exposed to opportunities to succeed or fail (period "at risk"). The manner in which LCER approached these problems in developing this study is explained in Chapters I and III and Appendices A and C of the report.

Based upon the data that are available, it appears the youths who have been in residential rehabilitation programs have an overall recidivism rate of roughly 50 percent. There is evidence that the rate varies significantly depending upon the background characteristics of the youths. An important question for youth rehabilitative efforts is the types of programs that appear to work best. In addressing this issue, several studies have compared programs with a high degree of security to those where youths are placed in a less restrictive setting. Some of these studies have concluded that the less restrictive setting works as well as the more secure programs in reducing the recidivism rates of youths.

Chapter Summary

- The process of defining and measuring criminal recidivism is a complex undertaking. The most frequent methodological problems faced by researchers concerning recidivism are the appropriate definitions, the use of a sufficient follow-up or "at risk" period, and the degree of similarity among groups resident in different programs.

- LCER identified several studies in the penology literature fairly comparable to the DFY follow-up study reported in this audit. Reviewing the literature, Bartollas and Miller concluded that approximately 50 percent of youthful parolees are rearrested and 30 to 40 percent are reconvicted after release from custody. These figures are similiar to LCER's findings on arrest and conviction rates reported in Chapter I.

- A review of several other comparable studies on juvenile recidivism after release, controlling for program type, indicates that youths generally do as well and sometimes better in a community based program than in a more restrictive institutional program. The costs of the community based programs also were substantially lower.

III DFY PROGRAM IMPACT

This chapter reviews the relationship between LCER's study group's DFY admission history and its post-DFY behavior in an effort to measure program impact. The analysis centers on the relationship of the youth's type of stay in DFY residential facilities to his subsequent criminal history, education, and employment record, while controlling for background variables (e.g., sex, most serious prior offense, etc.) that affect outcome. Appendix C provides information on the statistical techniques used to select the background variables used as controls and the procedures for the selection of the admission history variables and the outcome measures used in the analysis.

Outcome Measures and Background Variables

The following is a summary of the outcome measures and background variables used in LCER's data analysis.

Outcome Measures

A summary of the outcomes used to gauge the post-DFY experience in relation to type of DFY program exposure is presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Outcome Measures for DFY Study Group

		Base[a]
Arrest		(771)
Percent Rearrested	51.8	
Average Number of Arrests	1.5	
Convictions		(771)
Percent Convicted	30.4	
Average Number of Convictions	.5	
Most Serious Arrest		(394)
Percent with Felony[b]	78.4	
Post DFY Education		(495)
Percent received High School Diploma or GED	16.0	
Post DFY Employment Period		(398)
	Percent	
Never Employed	25.4	
Under 6 Months	44.0	
6-12 Months	17.1	
More than 12 Months	13.6	

[a] Differences in base numbers reflect the availability of data for each variable.
[b] Based on number of youth arrested.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

The outcome measures include the following:

-Criminal History
  Arrests,
  Most Serious Arrest,
  Convictions;

--Post-DFY Education; and

--Post-DFY Employment Period.

About one-half of the youths were rearrested and slightly over 30 percent were reconvicted. Almost four-fifths of those arrested were charged with a felony. Approximately one of every six youths received a high school diploma or a general equivalency diploma (GED) and almost three-quarters of the youths had some employment experience after leaving the division. The average youth had been in the community for 22 months after leaving DFY care.

Background Variables

Table 6 highlights the background variables used as controls in LCER's comparative analysis of outcomes in relation to DFY program experience. Not surprisingly, sex of the youth was related to four of the five outcome measures. Males were substantially more likely to have worse criminal history records and were less likely to have received a high school diploma than females. The "at risk" period after the youth's DFY experience, his place of residence (New York City-Outside New York City), and the most serious prior offense were the other variables strongly related to more than one outcome.

Analysis of Relationships

The following is a summary of the analysis undertaken by LCER. As noted earlier, the focus is on significant relationships between outcome measures compared to the DFY admission history of the youths in LCER's study group. A critical element in this analysis is that comparisons were made among youths with similar background characteristics and different experiences (lengths of stay) in DFY's level system (admissions history).

Criminal History Record

Table 7 highlights the most significant relationships between the youth's background and the post-DFY criminal history record. Males had substantially more arrests, convictions, and felony arrests than females. Those at risk for a period exceeding one year were far more likely to be arrested and convicted. New York City youths had a greater proportion of convictions and felony arrests than those outside the city. However, this relationship could be a function of the criminal justice system.

The relationship between arrests and convictions and the most serious prior offense is not strong. However, as an important criteria for DFY placement decisions, the most serious prior offense was used to assess the impact of different DFY admission histories on outcome. For example, 46.1 percent of youths with no prior offenses were primarily or exclusively placed in non-community based facilities compared to 81.2 percent of those with prior misdemeanors and 83.6 percent of those with prior felonies. Thus, the impact of this policy--placing youths with prior felonies and misdemeanors primarily in non-community based programs and youths with no prior offenses in the two programs in equal proportions can be assessed by controlling for the most serious prior offense.

Table 6

Background Variables* Significantly Related to Outcome Measures For DFY Study Group

Background Variables	Outcome Measures: Total Arrests	Total Convictions	Most Serious Arrest	High School Diploma or GED	Employment Period
Sex	+	+	+	+	-
Risk Period after Leaving DFY	+	+	-	-	+
Place of Residence	-	+	+	+	+
Ethnicity	-	-	-	+	-
Year of Birth	-	-	-	+	-
Housing Situation Inhibits Social Development	-	-	-	-	+
Age at DFY Admission	-	-	-	-	+
Most Serious Prior Offense	+	+	-	+	-

Note: + = Presence of relationship.
- = Absence of relationship.

*The background variables significantly related to outcome were selected based upon cross tabulations with the outcome measures and a series of regression equations to eliminate spurious relationships caused by other intervening variables. For a detailed explanation of the statistical techniques used in selecting these variables see Appendix C.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

Table 7

Criminal History Record by Selected Background Characteristics DFY Study Group

Background Characteristics	Arrested: Percent	Arrested: Base[a]	Convicted: Percent	Convicted: Base[a]	Felony Arrest: Percent	Felony Arrest: Base[a]
Sex						
Male	39.0	(602)[b]	37.7	(602)[b]	82.6	(351)[c]
Female	25.4	(167)[b]	4.2	(167)[b]	41.1	(41)[c]
Risk Period						
Under 1 year	28.7	(105)	13.3	(105)	N.S.	
1 year and over	55.7	(666)	33.3	(666)	N.S.	
Place of Residence						
New York City	N.S.		40.2	(288)	91.8	(159)[c]
Outside New York City	N.S.		24.5	(431)	69.4	(235)[c]
Most Serious Prior Offense						
No prior offense	47.5	(322)	25.2	(322)	N.S.	
Misdemeanor	57.5	(186)	37.1	(186)	N.S.	
Felony	52.7	(262)	32.7	(262)	N.S.	

[a] Differences in base numbers reflect the availability of data for each variable.
[b] Two cases not coded for sex omitted from table.
[c] Number based upon youths arrested.

N.S. - Variable not significantly related to outcome measure using criteria discussed in Appendix C.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

Arrests

Table 8 breaks down the post-DFY arrest and conviction records by the percent of time spent in community based facilities. Controls for sex and most serious prior offense are added. Analysis of the conviction data is discussed below. "At risk" period was an additional control variable for all arrest and conviction data but had no impact except as discussed below. Females with no prior offenses did slightly better in community based programs. However, very few of those females were placed primarily or exclusively in non-community based programs. The percent arrested among males with prior misdemeanors or no prior offenses did not vary significantly based on their DFY admission patterns and, in fact, such youths did somewhat better when placed in community based programs. Males with prior felonies did somewhat better when placed in non-community based programs.

This last relationship requires an additional explanation. Approximately 85 percent of all males with prior felonies were placed primarily or exclusively in non-community based programs. Even when the "at risk" period is added as a control variable (23.6 percent of the youths with prior felonies had "at risk" periods of under one year compared to only 9.2 percent for the rest of the youths), males with prior felonies and "at risk" periods over one year had fewer post-DFY arrests when placed exclusively in non-community based programs (55.7 percent) compared to those who stayed solely in community based programs (68.4 percent).

Analyzing this relationship by the facility where the youth spent the longest period of time provides additional clarification. Table 9 reveals that males with prior felonies who stayed longest in secure facilities (Level I) had the lowest rearrest rate (39.1 percent) while those placed longest in a Youth Development Center (YDC) had the highest rearrest rate (87.5 percent). There is no substantial difference in arrest rates for male felons staying in limited secure, residential centers, or urban homes. The lower arrest rate of male felons in secure facilities persists when "at risk" period is added as a control.

Convictions

The proportion of post-DFY convictions by percent of time in community based facilities is shown in Table 8. Females with no prior offenses placed exclusively in community based facilities had fewer convictions than females placed primarily or exclusively in non-community based facilities. However, as noted above, the numbers are small. Unlike arrests, males with no prior offenses or prior misdemeanors had somewhat fewer convictions when placed exclusively in community based programs compared to those placed only in non-community based programs. However, this relationship is weak since males with no prior offenses or prior misdemeanors placed primarily, but not solely, in non-community programs (Under 50 percent category) had similiar conviction rates to those placed exclusively in community based programs.

Paralleling the data reported on post-DFY arrests, males with prior felonies had lower conviction rates when placed in non-community based programs than any other group. However, this relationship does not persist when "at risk" period is added as a control.

Analyzing the conviction data by longest length of facility stay for males with prior felonies (Table 9) results in similar patterns to the arrest data shown in the same table. Males with prior felonies placed in secure facilities for their longest stays had the lowest conviction rate (19.6 percent) among the six levels. Male felons in limited secure,

Table 8

DFY Admission History Compared to
Incidence of Arrests and Convictions
(By Sex)

Percent of Time in Community Based (CB) Facilities	Most Serious Prior Offense											
	Arrested						Convicted					
	No Prior		Misdemeanor		Felony		No Prior		Misdemeanor		Felony	
	Percent	Base*	Percent	Base*	Percent	Base*	Percent	Base*	Percent	Base*	Percent	Base*
Male												
No CB Days	64.2	(67)	70.4	(71)	50.4	(119)	41.8	(67)	50.7	(71)	29.4	(119)
Under 50%	55.8	(52)	64.7	(51)	53.5	(86)	32.7	(52)	37.3	(51)	34.9	(86)
50-99%	70.6	(17)	53.8	(13)	68.4	(19)	58.8	(17)	46.2	(13)	52.6	(19)
All CB Days	52.9	(70)	63.2	(19)	72.2	(18)	30.0	(70)	36.8	(19)	55.6	(18)
Total	58.7	(206)	66.2	(154)	54.5	(242)	36.9	(206)	44.2	(154)	34.3	(242)
Female												
No CB Days	40.0	(10)	23.1	(13)	50.0	(6)	10.0	(10)	7.7	(13)	33.3	(6)
Under 50%	31.6	(19)	12.5	(16)	12.5	(8)	5.3	(19)	.0	(16)	.0	(8)
50-99%	30.0	(10)	--	--	25.0	(4)	.0	(10)	--	--	.0	(4)
All CB Days	23.7	(76)	.0	(3)	50.0	(2)	2.6	(76)	.0	(3)	.0	(2)
Total	27.0	(115)	15.6	(32)	30.0	(20)	3.5	(115)	3.2	(32)	10.0	(20)

*Differences in base numbers reflect availability of data for each variable.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

Table 9

Incidence of Arrest and Convictions for
Males With Prior Felonies by
Longest Length of Stay by Type of Facility

Longest Length of Stay by Facility Type	Percentage of Males With Prior Felonies Base Arrested	Convicted	Number
Secure Facilities	39.1	19.6	(46)
Limited Secure	53.2	35.1	(77)
Special Residential Centers	100.0	100.0	(1)
Residential Centers	56.8	34.6	(81)
Youth Development Centers	87.5	62.5	(16)
Urban Homes and Centers	57.1	38.1	(21)
Total	54.5	34.3	(242)

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

residential centers, and urban homes had conviction rates ranging from 34.6 to 38.1 percent. Again, male felons with the longest length of stay in the YDCs had the highest conviction rate (62.5 percent). Controlling for the "at risk" period eliminates the significance of the relationship. Males with prior felonies with "at risk" periods over one year had similiar conviction rates in all facilities except for YDCs.

Most Serious Arrest

Table 10 presents the proportion of youths arrested for felonies by the portion of their DFY stay spent in community based facilities. The most serious prior offense variable was not used as a control because it was not strongly related to the most serious arrest. Those who spent all their DFY stay in non-community based facilities were only slightly more likely to be arrested for a felony than those residing only in community based programs (81.4 percent to 72.5 percent). However, the differences are less pronounced when controls for sex and county of residence are added. Only community based youths outside New York City have a somewhat significantly lower percentage of felony arrests (61.2 percent compared to 73.5 percent of youths with no community based days). This is because females are a larger proportion (27.2 percent) of youths resident outside New York City than those in the City (12.5 percent).

Criminal History Summary

There was no significant pattern of arrest and conviction rates for youths with no prior offenses or with a prior misdemeanor. Youths with prior felonies had somewhat

Table 10

Percent Rearrested for Felony by Youth's DFY Residential History Controlling for Selected Background Variables

Portion of Time Spent In Community Based (CB) Facilities	Sex				Place of Residence				Total	
	Male		Female		New York City		Outside New York City			
	Percent	Base[a]	Percent	Base[a]	Percent	Base[a]	Percent	Base[a]	Percent	Base[a]
No CB Days	84.2[b]	(152)	33.3	(9)	93.7	(63)	73.5	(98)	81.4	(161)
Under 50 percent	81.3	(107)	55.6	(9)	91.8	(49)	70.6	(68)	79.5	(117)
50-99 percent	78.1	(32)	56.0	(4)	87.5	(16)	65.0	(20)	75.0	(36)
All CB Days	83.3	(60)	36.8	(19)	90.3	(31)	61.2	(49)	72.5	(80)
Total	82.6	(351)	41.5	(41)	91.8	(159)	69.4	(235)	78.4	(394)[c]

[a]Differences in base numbers reflect the availability of data for each variable.
[b]Percent rearrested for felony of all those youths rearrested.
[c]Total is based upon "County of Residence" column because two cases are missing for the sex variable.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

lower arrest rates if their longest length of stay was in a secure facility. Youths with prior felonies placed in a YDC for their longest stay had extremely high arrest and conviction rates. Variations in the most serious arrest variable were explained principally by sex and, to a lesser extent, by place of residence.

Education

Table 11 identifies the four variables--sex, most serious prior offense, year of birth, and ethnicity--most strongly related to youths obtaining a high school diploma or a GED. Not surprisingly, those born between 1960-1962 (whose ages would have ranged between 19 and 21 years) are substantially more likely to have received a diploma (24.0 percent) than those born later (9.3 percent). Youths with prior felonies were more likely to receive a diploma than youths with prior misdemeanors (14.9 percent to 7.1 percent, respectively). Whites were more successful in obtaining a diploma than non-whites (22.3 percent to 11.9 percent).

Table 12 compares the percent of youths who either obtained a diploma or a GED in relation to the DFY community/non-community based experience, controlling for most

Table 11

Education Record by
Selected Background Characteristics
DFY Study Group

Background Characteristics	Percent Receiving High School Diploma or GED	Base*
Sex		
Male	14.1	(397)
Female	23.5	(98)
Most Serious Prior Offense		
No Prior	23.4	(175)
Misdemeanor	7.1	(126)
Felony	14.9	(194)
Year of Birth		
1960-62	24.0	(225)
1963-67	9.3	(270)
Ethnicity		
White	22.3	(192)
Non-white	11.9	(303)

*Differences in base numbers reflect the availability of data for each variable.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

Table 12

Percent of Youths Receiving High School Diploma or GED by DFY Admission History

Percent of Time in Community Based (CB) Facilities	Most Serious Prior Offense					
	No Prior		Misdemeanor		Felony	
	Percent	Base*	Percent	Base*	Percent	Base*
No CB Days	23.7	(55)	4.8	(62)	14.6	(96)
Under 50%	14.9	(47)	10.9	(46)	19.2	(73)
50-99%	55.6	(9)	.0	(2)	6.7	(15)
All CB Days	25.0	(64)	6.3	(16)	.0	(10)
Total	23.4	(175)	7.1	(126)	14.9	(194)

*Differences in base number reflect the availability of data for each variable.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

serious prior offense. There are no significant differences in the incidence of youths who obtained a high school diploma or GED for those with no prior offenses or misdemeanors by percent of time in community based programs. Youths with prior felonies were somewhat more likely to complete their degree if they resided primarily or exclusively in non-community based facilities.

Analyzing this outcome criteria by the facility where the youth stayed the longest sheds further light on the impact of different DFY admission patterns. Table 13 shows that youths with no prior offenses were more likely to receive their diplomas if their longest facility stay was in a residential center or the urban homes and/or centers than in a limited secure facility. No clear pattern can be discerned for youths with prior misdemeanors, except that only 2.6 percent of non-whites compared to 14.6 percent of the whites completed their degree. Youths with prior felonies, as noted previously, had higher degree completion rates if placed in non-community based programs. This is true particularly for non-whites. For whites the youths did somewhat better in residential centers (37.5 percent) than limited secure facilities (17.6 percent). There are too few whites with prior felonies in community based programs to make a comparison.

Employment History

Table 14 presents the three factors--"at risk" period, age at DFY admission, and whether the youths' housing situation inhibits their social growth--most strongly related to post-DFY employment. The former two factors reflect the common sense notion that older youths in the community longer are more likely to have obtained employment. The latter factor--an item on the DFY Intake-Assessment form--probably indicates a link between the household social atmosphere and its impact on limited employment

Table 13

Percent of Youths Receiving High School Diploma or GED by Longest Length of Stay DFY Study Group

Longest Length Of Stay	Most Serious Prior Offense											
	White						Non-White					
	No Prior		Misdemeanor		Felony		No Prior		Misdemeanor		Felony	
	Percent	Base*	Percent	Base*	Percent	Base*	Percent	Base*	Percent	Base*	Percent	Base*
Secure	--		33.3	(6)	25.0	(4)	0.0	(2)	0.0	(6)	7.9	(38)
Limited Secure	0.0	(13)	17.1	(14)	17.6	(17)	5.6	(18)	2.7	(37)	14.9	(47)
Special Residential	--		--		--		0.0	(2)	--		--	
Residential	23.8	(42)	13.6	(22)	37.5	(24)	35.0	(20)	5.3	(19)	13.2	(38)
Youth Development Centers	0.0	(4)	0.0	(2)	0.0	(1)	35.3	(17)	0.0	(3)	0.0	(7)
Urban Homes and Centers	34.3	(35)	25.0	(4)	25.0	(4)	22.7	(22)	0.0	(13)	0.0	(14)
Total	23.4	(94)	14.6	(48)	28.0	(50)	23.5	(81)	2.6	(78)	10.4	(144)

*Differences in base numbers reflect the availability of data for each variable.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

Table 14

Employment Record by
Selected Background Characteristics
DFY Study Group

	Percent Never Employed	Base[a]
"At Risk" Period		
Under 1 year	33.3	(48)
1 year or Over	24.3	(350)
Age at DFY Admission		
Under 15	34.3	(166)
15 or older	19.0	(232)
Housing Inhibits Social Development[b]		
Yes	35.8	(81)
No	17.8	(129)

[a]Differences in base numbers reflect the availability of data for each variable.

[b]Variable taken from the Intake-Assessment Form has fewer cases because of missing data.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

opportunities. As noted for the most serious arrest outcome measure, the most serious prior offense item was not significantly related to post-DFY employment.

Table 15 shows the percent of youths never employed after leaving DFY compared to the percent of time the youths resided in community or non-community based facilities. There is no significant variation in employment levels by the admission history variable. The three background variables explain any variations in the level of post-DFY employment.

Conclusions

Based on the results of the LCER follow-up study, it appears that DFY appropriately placed a group of male felons in the secure centers. The appropriateness of these placement decisions is somewhat reinforced by the high arrest rates of the males with prior felonies placed primarily in the YDCs (although the number--16--for YDC placements of felons in LCER's study group is low). This group of high-risk males, however, is only six percent (46) of the entire LCER study population.

Youths with no prior offenses and males with prior misdemeanors did not have significantly different criminal history outcomes when percent of time in community based and non-community based programs is used as a control. There were too few cases

Table 15

Percent of Youths Never Employed by DFY Residential History
Controlling for Selected Background Variables

Percent of Time in Community Based	"At Risk" Period				Age at DFY Facility Admission				Housing Inhibits Social Development[b]				Total[c]	
	Under 1 Year		Over 1 year		14 or under		15 or older		Yes		No			
(CB) Facilities	Percent	Base[a]	Percent	Base[a]	Percent	Base[a]	Percent	Base[a]	Percent	Base[a]	Percent	Base[a]	Percent	Base[a]
No CB Days	55.0[d]	(20)	22.1	(145)	31.2	(66)	22.2	(99)	33.3	(42)	20.5	(78)	26.1	(165)
Under 50 percent	18.2	(22)	26.2	(107)	36.4	(66)	12.7	(63)	38.9	(18)	7.4	(27)	24.8	(129)
50-99 percent	20.0	(5)	29.4	(17)	38.4	(13)	11.	(9)	40.0	(5)	33.3	(3)	27.3	(22)
All CB Days	.0	(1)	24.7	(81)	33.3	(21)	21..	(61)	37.5	(16)	19.0	(21)	24.4	(82)
Total	33.3	(48)	24.3	(350)	34.3	(166)	19.0	(232)	35.8	(81)	17.8	(129)	25.4	(398)

[a]Differences in base numbers reflect the availability of data for each variable.

[b]This variable taken from the YST Intake-Assessment form has fewer cases because of missing data.

[c]Total is based upon cases reported for Risk Period and Age at DFY Admission variables.

[d]Percentage is percent never employed after leaving DFY.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

of females with prior misdemeanors and prior felonies to draw any conclusions from the data. For example, over one-half (57.5 percent) of the males with no prior offenses and 79.2 percent of the males with prior misdemeanors were placed primarily or exclusively in non-community based programs. Yet their arrest and conviction rates do not differ significantly from youths placed primarily in community based programs.

LCER's findings are consistent with the studies reviewed in Chapter II. The arrest rate of 51.8 percent and the conviction rate of 30.6 percent are similiar to the results of studies of juvenile populations with comparable characteristics and follow-up periods. The absence of a clear link between program types and subsequent post-DFY behavior parallels the results of the literature discussed previously.

Based on the analysis discussed in this chapter of the report, the following conclusions are warranted:

--Except for males with prior felonies, there was no significant difference in the post-DFY criminal history when DFY admission history was used as a control. Males with prior felonies whose longest length of stay was in a secure facility were somewhat less likely to be arrested and convicted.

--Youths with prior felonies in residential centers and youths with no prior offenses in urban homes and residential facilities were more likely to obtain their nigh school diploma than other youths with comparable criminal history backgrounds.

--There is no significant relationship between DFY admission history and youths' post-DFY employment experience.

Chapter Summary

● Eight background variables were related strongly to one or more of the criminal history, education, and employment outcome measures selected by LCER staff to analyze the youths' post-DFY behavior.

● Males and youths with an "at risk" period over one year were substantially more likely to be arrested. Males, those with "at risk" periods over one year, and New York City residents had the highest conviction rates and percentage of felony arrests.

● When background controls are added, there were no significant differences in post-DFY criminal records for youths with different DFY admission histories except for males with prior felonies. That group was less likely to be arrested if their longest stay was in a secure (Level I) facility. Youths with no prior offenses or prior misdemeanors had similar criminal records after release from DFY care regardless of DFY admission history.

● Females, whites and older youth were most likely to receive a high school diploma or a general equivalency degree. Youths with no prior offenses or with prior misdemeanors were more likely to complete their diploma if resident primarily in urban homes or residential centers. Males with prior felonies were more likely to complete their degree if placed in residential centers.

● Youths with "at risk" periods over one year, youths 15 or older at DFY admission, and youths whose housing situation did not inhibit their social growth were most likely to be employed after leaving DFY. There was no significant relationship between a youth's DFY admission history and the length of post-DFY employment.

FOOTNOTES

II Definitions of Recidivism and Measures of Outcome

1. Diana Travisons, Juvenile and Adult Correctional Departments, Institutions, Agencies and Paroling Authorities (College Park, Maryland: American Correctional Association Publication, 1981), p. XXV.
2. Clemens Bartollas and Stuart J. Miller, The Juvenile Offender: Control, Correction and Treatment (Boston: Holbrook Press, 1978), p. 369.
3. Douglas Lipton, Robert Martinson, and Judith Wilks. The Effectiveness of Correctional Treatment: A Survey of Treatment Evaluation Studies (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975).
4. Martinson made this statement in an article which summarized the research: Robert Martinson, "What Works?--Questions and Answers about Prison Reform," Public Interest 35 (Spring 1974), p. 48.
5. Robert B. Coates, Alden D. Miller and Lloyd E. Ohlin, Diversity in a Youth Correctional System: Handling Delinquents in Massachusetts (Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1978).
6. Ibid., p. 2.
7. Ibid., pp. 152-155 and p. 175.
8. Ibid.
9. Charles A. Murray, Douglas Thompson, and Cindy B. Israel, UDIS: Deinstitutionalizing the Chronic Juvenile Offender (Washington, D.C.: American Institute for Research, January 1978).
10. Ibid., pp. 4-6.
11. Ibid., p. 20.
12. Lamar T. Empey and Steven G. Lubeck, The Silverlake Experiment (Chicago: Aldin Publishing Company, 1971).
13. LaMar T. Empey and Maynard L. Erikson, The Provo Experiment (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1972).
14. NYS Division for Youth, Community Program Evaluation Unit, Delinquency Intervention in New York's Division for Youth: A Look at the Youngsters, Programs, and Outcomes. Final Report, August 1980.
15. Ibid., p. 174.
16. Ibid., p. 199.
17. Ibid.

APPENDIX A
METHODOLOGY

LCER's study methodology for the selection of the study population and collection and use of data is presented below.

Study Group

Two groups (referred to as cohorts*) were selected for the study. Criteria used for selecting these two groups included:

1. The first cohort consisted of the entire population (521) of youths admitted (whether a new admission, a transfer, or a readmission after discharge) to DFY secure and other non-community based facilities during July-December 1978.

2. The second cohort consisted of the entire population (250) of youths released to aftercare or discharged from DFY community based facilities during January-June 1979.

For both groups a minimum 30-day residence in a DFY facility was required for selection. A 30-day minimum length of stay was used to ensure at least a minimal degree of exposure to DFY programs. However, this affected only a few cases in either cohort. Average length of stay for both groups exceeded one year (see Chapter I). The two cohorts were combined for purposes of analysis. The reasons for selecting the sample in the manner described are:

Residence Time Frame. To control for program exposure during a similar time frame (to minimize problems associated with changes in program environment), it was necessary to obtain the admission cohort from non-community based facilities during a period preceding the discharge time frame of the community based cohort. On average, youths admitted to DFY non-community based facilities had a longer period of residence than those admitted to community based facilities. Therefore, many of the youths released from community based facilities during January-June 1979 (the second cohort) would have been admitted during the July-December 1978 period, and, conversely, many of the non-community based admissions (the first cohort) would have been released during the January-June 1979 period. The pattern of admission/discharge for the two groups confirmed the validity of the assumption. Consequently, the time frame of DFY program exposure of the two groups was similar.

"At Risk" Period. Another important consideration was to minimize the differences in the length of time the youths would be considered "at risk" (see Chapter II for further discussion of "at risk" period) in the community. The overlap of the residence time frames of the two cohorts discussed above resulted in comparable average "at risk" periods (from the time of release from DFY for the periods sampled to the cut-off date of August 1981)--20 months for the first cohort and 27 months for the second cohort.

Program Exposure. An important issue addressed in this study is the impact of different types of program exposures--defined in terms of DFY's residential level system

*A cohort differs from a sample in that a cohort includes all participants in a given time period while a sample selects a portion of participants.

(see Chapter I of Management of Youth Rehabilitation Programs). In accordance with DFY policy, youths are placed in the least restrictive setting. Youths are transferred to different levels of residential care (either more or less restrictive) depending on their program needs and changes in observed behavior. By obtaining a cohort from DFY's non-community based and community based programs, this ensured a group of youths (when the two cohorts were combined) with a representative mix of exposure to different levels of residential care.

Time Period. For purpose of evaluating the post-DFY experiences of youths, it was necessary to have a group of youths "at risk" in the community a sufficient time to avail themselves of opportunities to succeed or fail. The time period July 1978 to June 1979, allowed for an average post-DFY "at risk" period of almost two years.

Data Collection

The background variables, the admission history variables, and the post-DFY education, employment, and criminal history items collected by LCER for analysis are discussed below.

Background Variables. LCER selected 89 variables, describing the characteristics of the youths, from the DFY Analysis File for control and comparison purposes. The variables are listed in Appendix B.

Missing information limited the usefulness of some variables selected for analysis. The basic youth demographic information essentially was complete. However, DFY first routinely began collecting additional data on each youth's background using seven Intake-Assessment forms during the April 1978 to March 1979 period. These forms included data on the youth's family and school history, health problems, delinquency record and other behavioral problems. Many youths selected in the non-community based cohort were readmissions or transfers from other facilities. Thus, their first DFY admission may have predated the widespread use of the Intake-Assessment forms resulting in missing information on many variables. This also may be true for some youths in the community based cohort. Furthermore, the YST workers may not have been able to obtain information from the schools and the courts.* Also, YST worker assessments of the youth's background frequently requires a subjective judgment made during the two weeks a youth usually is processed and admitted to a DFY program.

Admissions History. LCER staff defined a DFY placement as the beginning of the youth's first admission to a DFY facility and ending with his release to foster care, independent living or aftercare status for at least 30 days. The youth's DFY admission history was recorded from the beginning of his first DFY placement to the completion of the placement selected for the study. The youth may or may not have had one or more placements prior to the placement in which he was selected. Within this time frame, LCER staff recorded the number, length, and type of DFY facility stays (community based or non-community based) and placements, the number of under 30-day facility experiences, any private care facility stays, the longest stay in a DFY facility and the time spent on foster care, counseling, or independent living status. A facility stay was defined as a minimum of 30 continuous days. The time from the end of the placement selected until August 1, 1981 was recorded as the "at risk" period. The variables coded from the youth's admission history are listed in Appendix B.

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*New York State Division for Youth, A Summary of Intake Assessment Data: 1978-79 (Albany, N.Y., August 1979).

The coding design is consistent with the LCER intent to assess the relative effectiveness of DFY's community based and non-community based facilities. The residential program experience of the youth's admission history is highlighted by defining DFY facility admission as the beginning of a youth's placement. Requiring a 30-day stay in counseling, foster care, or independent living to complete a placement treats weekend transfers to foster care as part of the same placement (though the days in foster care were added to time spent in community care). Ending the detailed recoding of the youth's admission history at the finish of the placement in which the youth was selected provided for a relatively uniform "at risk" period for youths in the two cohorts. Only six percent of the youths had additional DFY placements after the placement in which they were selected. Days spent in these additional placements were also recorded.

The information on the youth's admission history was sometimes incomplete. For example, beginning or ending dates of a facility stay occasionally were missing from the DFY computer printout. Judgments on coding these cases were made consistent with the coding design and purpose of the study.

Post-DFY Educational and Employment Record. LCER obtained a 96.6 percent response rate from the Youth Service Teams' (YST) survey. Of those returned, 22.8 percent had no information on the youth's current status beyond his current residence and the grade level of initial community school placement. The no response/don't know rate on individual survey items varied from 26.1 percent (initial community school placement) to 63.6 percent (current occupation).

There are several reasons for these no response/don't know rates. First, most of the youths left DFY facilities from one and one-half to two and one-half years after the time period used for selection. While youths usually are on aftercare from six months to a year after release from a facility, many YST workers probably lost contact with youths discharged from their supervision and therefore could not respond to the survey items. Second, LCER staff noted that the proportion of no response/don't know answers varied widely among YSTs. This may be because of the quality or extensiveness of aftercare services provided by the over 40 YSTs surveyed.

Criminal History Data. In analyzing the data, LCER staff was sensitive to two principal limitations. First, juvenile criminal history information collected by Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) was minimal because of statutory restrictions. Fortunately, this drawback did not affect LCER's criminal history analysis because most of the youths in the sample had turned 16 years of age and were subject to arrest as adults prior to leaving DFY. Information on adult arrests was far more complete. Second, information on disposition of adult arrests (acquittal, conviction by jury trial, or plea of guilty) was frequently missing. For example, LCER found no disposition information for 58 percent of the adult and juvenile arrests after youths left DFY.

The criminal history data were divided into three periods--before the youth's first DFY facility admission, during the youth's DFY stay until the end of the placement in which he was selected, and after that placement until August 1, 1981. In each segment, the number of arrests, misdemeanor and felony charges and convictions, and arrests with no dispositions were recorded separately for adult and juvenile criminal histories. For the last period, the time lapsed until the youth's first juvenile and first adult arrest and the youth's most serious adult and juvenile arrests and convictions also were recorded. The "at risk" period--from end of placement selected until August 1, 1981--already was recorded as part of the youth's DFY Admission History. Any prison admissions indicated on the DCJS criminal histories and the length of the minimum and maximum sentences for those admissions also were coded. A list of the criminal history variables is presented in Appendix B.

APPENDIX B

VARIABLES INCLUDED IN LCER FOLLOW-UP STUDY ANALYSIS

The variables on the youth's background, admission history, post-DFY education and employment record, and his criminal history considered in the LCER follow-up study analysis are:

Background Information

a. Intake Face Sheet

Date of Birth
Head of House-Relationship
Sex
Ethnicity
Religion
Referral Agency
Responsible County
Place of Residence
Current Adjudication

b. School and Employment

School Status-Pre-DFY
School Year Completed Pre-DFY
Academic Performance-Youth View
School Attitude-Youth View
School Behavior-Youth View
IQ Score
Academic Performance-School View
School Attitude-School View
School Behavior-School View
Verbal Subscore
Performance Subscore
Year of IQ Test
Name of IQ Test
Employment Status-Pre-DFY

c. Legal and Placement

Prior Court Contact
Number of Court Contacts
Prior Placement
Number Prior Placements
Referred to Court-Type 1
Placement Type-1
Reason Placed-1
Placement Date-1
Release Date-1
Reason for Leaving-1
Referred to Court-Type 2
Placement Type-2
Reason Placed-2
Placement Date-2
Release Date-2
Reason for Leaving-2
Referred to Court-Type 3
Placement Type-3
Reason Placed-3
Placement Date-3
Release Date-3
Reason for Leaving-3
Referred to Court-Type 4
Placement Type-4
Reason Placed-4
Placement Date-4
Release Date-4
Reason for Leaving-4
Referred to Court-Type 5
Placement Type-5
Reason Placed-5
Placement Date-5
Release Date-5
Reason for Leaving-5
Prior Adjudication
Prior Offense No. 1
Seriousness of Offense No. 1
Prior Offense No. 2
Seriousness of Offense No. 2
Prior Offense No. 3
Seriousness of Offense No. 3

d. Behavior Assessment

Psychiatric Assessment
On Medication
Substance Abuse
Previous Hospitalizations
Suicidal
Physical Aggressive-Passive
Verbal Aggressive-Passive
Self-Esteem
Personal Responsibility
Authority Relationship
Leader-Follower
Peer Group Relations

e. Family Situation

Persons in Household
Immediate Family Number
Usual Family Head
Marital Status-Head of Household

Language Spoken at Home
Natural Father-Race
Natural Mother-Race
Youth Identifies With
Housing Situation Inhibits Social Development
Primary Income Source
Annual Family Income

f. Other Background Variables

Social Services Assistance Type
Social Services Eligibility
Admission Type

DFY Admission History

Non-community based (NCB) or Community Based (CB) Sample
Number of DFY Placements
Length of Placement Sampled
First DFY Facility in Placement Selected
Last DFY Facility in Placement Selected
NCB Facility Stays
NCB Days
CB Facility Stays
CB Days
Under 30 Day Stays
Private Care Days
Facility of Longest Stay
Length of Longest Stay
Additional DFY Placements
Community Care Days
First Placement to End of Sample-Days
Days in Additional DFY Placement(s)
End of Placement to 8-1-81-Days ("At Risk" Period)

Post-DFY Education and Employment History

Current Residence
Community Grade Level Started
Community Grade Level Completed
GED or High School Diploma
Post-DFY Education Status
Type School Attended
Post-DFY Employment Period
Current Employment Status
Current Occupation

Criminal History Record-Division of Criminal Justice Services

a. Before DFY Admission

Pre-DFY Juvenile Arrests
Pre-DFY Juvenile Misdemeanor Charges
Pre-DFY Juvenile Felony Charges
Pre-DFY Juvenile Misdemeanor Convictions
Pre-DFY Juvenile Felony Convictions
Pre-DFY Juvenile Arrests-No Disposition
Pre-DFY Adult Arrests
Pre-DFY Adult Misdemeanor Charges
Pre-DFY Adult Felony Charges
Pre-DFY Adult Misdemeanor Convictions
Pre-DFY Adult Felony Convictions
Pre-DFY Adult Arrests-No Disposition

b. DFY Residence

DFY Juvenile Arrests
DFY Juvenile Misdemeanor Charges
DFY Juvenile Felony Charges
DFY Juvenile Misdemeanor Convictions
DFY Juvenile Felony Convictions
DFY Juvenile Arrests-No Disposition
DFY Adult Arrests
DFY Adult Misdemeanor Charges
DFY Adult Felony Charges
DFY Adult Misdemeanor Convictions
DFY Adult Felony Convictions
DFY Adult Arrests-No Disposition

c. Post-DFY Release

Post-DFY Juvenile Arrests
Post-DFY Juvenile Misdemeanor Charges
Post-DFY Juvenile Felony Charges
Post-DFY Juvenile Misdemeanor Convictions
Post-DFY Juvenile Felony Convictions
Post-DFY Juvenile Arrests-No Disposition
Post-DFY Adult Arrests
Post-DFY Adult Misdemeanor Charges
Post-DFY Adult Felony Charges
Post-DFY Adult Misdemeanor Convictions
Post-DFY Adult Felony Convictions
Post-DFY Arrests-No Disposition
End Placement-First Juvenile Arrest
End Placement-First Adult Arrest
Most Serious Juvenile Arrest
Most Serious Adult Arrest
Most Serious Juvenile Conviction
Most Serious Adult Conviction
Period Unspecified Convictions
Number Unspecified Convictions
Prison Admission to 8-1-81
Minimum Prison Sentence
Maximum Prison Sentence
Additional Sentences

APPENDIX C

SELECTION OF VARIABLES FOR ANALYSIS

From a universe of 165 variables, LCER staff (through discussions with DFY research staff and a series of statistical techniques) reduced the number of variables used for final analysis to those reported in the study. The details are outlined below. Variables are classified as background (impacting on post-DFY behavior), admission history (delineating a youth's DFY admission history), or outcome (education, employment and criminal history record after leaving DFY).

Background Variables

LCER staff selected 89 variables on the youth's background prior to entering DFY. The period from the end of the youth's placement in which he was selected until August 1, 1981--the "at risk" period--was treated as a background variable since it strongly correlated with four of the five outcome measures chosen for analysis.

Before beginning statistical analysis of the background variables, LCER staff dropped several variables because of questions of validity or usefulness. For example, variables such as the year of a youth's IQ test and the pre-DFY placement dates were not considered usable for LCER's analysis.

After eliminating those variables, LCER staff correlated background variables with outcome measures to determine statistically significant relationships. The test of statistical significance depended on the type of variable analyzed. For cross tabulations where one or both of the variables were nominal level, chi square was used. For analyses where one of the variables was ordinal and the other was ordinal, interval, or ratio, tau b or tau c was used depending on the size of the table. Tau b is used for square tables (same number of values in both variables) while tau c is appropriate for rectangular tables. When both variables were interval or ratio, the Pearson's r correlation coefficient was used. The test level of significance was set at .05 or lower.

Table C-1 presents the 29 background variables which were significantly related to one or more of the outcome measures. As statistically appropriate, variables were entered into stepwise regression equations with various combinations of the items related to each outcome measure. An F-ratio test with a significance level of .05 was used to separate those variables which explained the most variance in the outcome measures. Using the F-ratio test, the number of missing cases in each variable, and the substantive relationship between a background variable and an outcome measure, LCER staff selected the variables most strongly related to each outcome measure. Table C-2 summarizes the outcomes of the regression analysis for the five outcome measures listing the eight variables most strongly related to the five outcome measures. Chapter III presents the results of the cross tabulations of the admission history variable with the outcome measures controlling for the background measures.

DFY Admission History

As discussed in Chapter I, LCER staff collected information on the DFY admission history of the youths in the two cohorts. Appendix B lists the variables collected on the length and type of placements and stays in DFY.

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Table C-1

Background Variables Significantly Related To One Or More of Five DFY Outcome Measures

Variable	Total Arrests	Total Convictions	Most Serious Arrest	High School Diploma/GED	Employment Period
Most Serious Prior Offense	+[a] (771)[b]	+ (771)	-	+ (495)	-
Year of Birth	-	-	-	+ (495)	+ (398)
Age at DFY Admission	+ (771)	+ (771)	-	+ (495)	+ (398)
Sex	+ (769)	+ (769)	+ (392)	+ (495)	-
Ethnicity	-	+ (771)	+ (394)	+ (495)	-
Referral Agency	-	-	-	+ (495)	-
County of Residence	-	+ (771)	+ (394)	-	-
Current Adjudication	+ (771)	+ (771)	+ (394)	+ (495)	+ (393)
School Status Pre-DFY	-	-	+ (197)	-	-
Academic Performance Youth View	-	-	-	-	+ (221)
School-Youth Behavior	-	-	+ (135)	+ (195)	-
IQ Score	-	-	-	+ (177)	+ (142)
Verbal Subscore	-	-	-	+ (156)	-
Performance Subscore	-	+ (212)	-	-	-
Pre-DFY Employment Status	+ (401)	+ (401)	-	-	+ (221)
Prior Court Contact	+ (396)	-	-	+ (274)	-
Number Prior Contacts	+ (396)	+ (396)	+ (192)	+ (274)	-
Placement Type 1	-	-	-	+ (160)	-
Reason Placement 1	-	+ (217)	-	-	-
Psychological Assessment	-	+ (386)	-	+ (267)	-
Peer/Group Relations	-	-	-	+ (281)	-
Self Esteem	-	-	+ (198)	-	-
Housing Situation Social Development	-	-	-	+ (263)	+ (210)
Primary Income Source	-	-	+ (196)	+ (279)	-
"At Risk" Period	+ (771)	+ (771)	-	+ (495)	+ (398)
Youth School Behavior	+ (221)	-	+ (198)	-	-
Personal Responsibility	-	-	+ (197)	-	-
Authority Relationships	-	-	+ (198)	-	-
School-Youth Attitude	-	-	+ (188)	-	-

Note: + = Presence of relationship; - = Absence of relationship.

[a] Tests used for statistical significance were chi square, tau b or tau c, or Pearson's R at the .05 level. The test varied based on the data being used.

[b] Number in parentheses is number of cases.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

Table C-2

Summary Table-Regression Equations With
Outcome Measures and Background Variables

Outcome Measure	Variables Significant[a]	Simple r[b]	R^2 Explained By Significant Variables[c]
Arrests	Sex	-.26	.12
	"At Risk" Period	.16	
	Most Serious Prior Offense	.10	
Total Convictions	"At Risk" Period	.12	.13
	Sex	-.21	
	County of Residence	-.21	
	Most Serious Prior Offense	.09	
Most Serious Arrest	Sex	-.31	.14
	County of Residence	-.27	
High School Diploma	Year of Birth	.26	.11
	Ethnicity	.17	
	Sex	-.08	
	Most Serious Prior Offense	.17	
Employment Period	"At Risk" Period	.22	.10
	Housing Inhibits Youth	-.18	
	Age of DFY Admission	.18	

[a]Significant variables determined by F-ratio at .05 level, the substantive significance of the relationship with outcome measures, and the number of missing cases in the variable.
[b]Simple r is the zero order correlation of each background variable with each outcome measure.
[c]R^2 is percent of outcome measure explained by significant variables.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data obtained for DFY study group.

LCER staff cross-tabulated the admission history measures with the five outcome measures chosen for analysis. Using the appropriate tests of significance discussed above, LCER staff identified the admission history variables significantly related to one of the five outcome measures. While 14 of the admission history measures were significantly related to one or more of the outcome measures, only three variables--number of days in community based facilities, number of days in non-community based facilities, and the percentage of DFY residential care spent in community based facilities--were related significantly to at least four of the five outcome measures (see Table C-3). These days were calculated based on all of the youths' DFY placements including the placement sampled. Since the latter variable takes into account the youth's residential stay in all DFY facilities, it was selected as the principal variable to summarize the youth's DFY residential experience. The facility where the youth had the longest stay also was used when it clarified the relationship between admission history and a given outcome measure.

Table C-3

Admission History Variables Significantly
Related to One or More Outcome Measures

Variable	Total Arrests (771)[b]	Total Convictions (771)[b]	Most Serious Arrest (394)[b]	High School Diploma or GED (495)[b]	Employment Period (398)[b]
Facility Stays	+[a]	-	+	+	-
Non-community Based Days	+	+	+	+	+
Community Based Facility Stays	-	-	-	-	+
Community Based Days	+	+	+	+	+
Under 30 Days Stays	-	-	+	-	-
Facility Longest Stay	-	-	+	-	+
Portion of Time in Community Based Facilities	+	+	+	-	+
Length of Placement Sampled	-	-	-	-	+
First DFY Facility in Placement	-	-	-	-	+
Last DFY Facility in Placement	-	-	-	+	+
Movement in DFY[c]	-	-	-	-	+
Time from First Placement to End of Sample	+	+	-	-	-
Non-community Based or Community Based Sample	-	-	+	-	-

[a]Tests used for statistical significance were chi square, tau b or tau c, or Pearson's R at the .05 level. The tests varied based on the data being used.
[b]Number in parentheses is number of cases relationship is based upon.
[c]Movement within placement sampled.

Source: LCER staff analysis of data o tained for DFY Study Group.

Outcome Measures

The educational, employment, and criminal history outcome measures selected for analysis were chosen recognizing the extent of the missing data and the substantive importance of each variable.

Total Arrests. This measure gives some indication of the level of the youth's criminal activity after leaving DFY. The information on arrests in the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) records was more complete than data on disposition of those arrests. Information on post-DFY juvenile and adult arrests is combined in this measure. Arrests have been a commonly used variable in many recidivism studies of juveniles leaving residential care as discussed in Chapter II.

Total Convictions. The use of the total number of post-DFY adult and juvenile convictions balances off the fact that arrest data do not indicate guilt or innocence for a particular criminal activity. Police may be more likely to arrest a youth leaving DFY and returning to his home community because of suspicion based on a youth's record. Such arrests may not be prosecuted because of inadequate evidence. Unlike the arrest data, information on disposition of arrests in the DCJS data base is incomplete. As mentioned in Appendix A, 58 percent of the post-DFY arrests had no accompanying disposition information on the DCJS criminal histories.

Most Serious Arrest. LCER coded the class (A-E) and type (felony or misdemeanor) of the most serious adult and juvenile arrest after the youth left DFY. For analysis purposes, the more serious of the post-DFY adult and juvenile arrests was chosen and the categories were collapsed into felonies and misdemeanors. This variable supplements the arrest data by taking into account the seriousness of the arrest record.

LCER staff also coded the youth's most serious post-DFY adult and juvenile conviction. However, the lack of disposition information on arrests and the problem of unspecified convictions (where a sentence was known but not the crime of conviction) made the data unusable for analysis.

High School Diploma or GED. Whether a youth received a high school diploma or a general equivalency degree (GED) was gathered from the Youth Services Team (YST) survey. Given the low reading and math levels and the large proportion of school failures (almost 58 percent of the youths had not attended school regularly, were suspended, or had dropped out prior to DFY admission), receipt of a high school diploma or a GED was a good measure of educational achievement. LCER staff recognized that some youths in the study were too young to ordinarily have received a high school diploma and used year of birth as a control to take that into account.

Other educational variables collected by LCER such as the youth's post-DFY educational status and the highest grade completed do not reflect achievement as well. The post-DFY educational status variable was not used because almost all of the youths had left DFY after age 16 and therefore were not required to attend school. The highest grade completed may reflect an effort to promote a youth regardless of the educational progress made.

Employment Period. The employment period after a youth left DFY is a measure equivalent to the youth's pre-DFY school status. As regular school attendance is a good measure of stability for youths under 16, the length of employment becomes the important consideration for youths over 16 who have usually left school shortly after leaving DFY. Information on the youth's current employment status and current occupation as reported in the YST survey had more missing cases than the length of employment period. Furthermore, LCER staff felt that length of post-DFY employment gave better information for analytical purposes than the other two variables.

APPENDIX D

AGENCY RESPONSE

FRANK A. HALL
DIRECTOR

NEW YORK STATE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
DIVISION FOR YOUTH
84 HOLLAND AVENUE
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12208

July 26, 1982

Mr. Sanford Russell
Director
Legislative Commission on Expenditure
Review
111 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 11210

COPY

Dear Mr. Russell:

We take this opportunity to acknowledge and respond to the two volume audit conducted by your office on Division for Youth residential programs. We also wish to express our appreciation for the extension granted in our submission of responses to these reports following our joint staff meeting on the substance of the report dealing with program impact. However, it was our understanding at that meeting that conclusions presented in the impact study, which we considered misleading, would be revised and refocused to conclusions that were more limited to the scope of the data. Unfortunately, we find that the impact study and its conclusions are essentially unchanged in substance. As a result, we must object to the overall thrust and direction of both the impact study as well as its companion study of program and management because the unsubstantiated conclusion of the impact study colors both volumes of this audit.

Detailed responses are enclosed which address our concerns in depth. (See New York State Division for Youth, Response to Reports by the Legislative Commission on Expenditure Review: Volume I, "Management of Residential Facilities for Youths;" and Volume II, "A Study of Impact - Placement of Youths in Residential Facilities.")* Those concerns may be outlined around the following areas:

1. Misleading Statements About Recidivism and Program Impact.

Our most serious reservation concerning the two volume audit lies with the unsupported conclusions drawn in the Volume II impact study which purport to demonstrate that similar clients are randomly placed in both community based and non-community based facilities of the Division for Youth, and when so placed, these cases demonstrate no differences in subsequent arrest

*Note: The report titles have been changed to: Management of Youth Rehabilitation Pr ,rams and Impact of Youth Rehabilitation Programs respectively.

recidivism. The conclusions drawn from these unfounded premises are that placements should be limited to the lowest cost option, that is, the open, community based facilities.

As we discussed with you and your staff on previous meetings, we find these statements false and misleading. First, this agency adheres to the law and to court decisions concerning various degrees of security in placing cases according to the severity of crime and related behavior. Secondly, we take issue with the use of data and its calculation which allowed your study to misinterpret trends without regard to missing data, which overlooked patterns and directions of program exposure and which simplistically grouped unlike cases together based on limited classificatory information, when, in fact, much more information was available to your staff concerning distinctions among DFY clients. These concerns are described in our response to Volume II.

We have already offered you an alternative explanation to any seemingly similar outcomes in recidivism between the two program types: If roughly similar recidivism rates obtain to both types of programs, it should be seen as a positive contribution of DFY programs in holding down a known high rate of potential recidivism among its high risk cases to where that recidivism was roughly equal to that of low risk cases.

2. Issues Related to Program Costs and Expenditures.

We indicate some exceptions to statements about cost increases when these statements fail to note the stringent cost control program carried out within DFY and the no-growth budgets of the current Fiscal Year. DFY has essentially expanded, developed and converted programs following legal mandates for such additional programs -- all with minimal impact on this agency's overall budget. Most of the program enhancements were accomplished by reallocation of resources and overall improvements in efficiency.

3. Issues Related to Program Services and their Effects

We agree with the general findings of the program audit which demonstrate positive contributions by DFY programs to the improvement and development of youth in its care. However, we question statements which claim that the levels of accomplishment in education and vocational readiness are sub-standard when those statements are not qualified by indicating the extremely deprived and deficient condition of most DFY clients at intake. DFY programs deal with remediation in all aspects of social functioning -- education, vocational readiness, social attitudes, emotional development and other critical areas of adolescent life. We feel that proper regard should be afforded to our program accomplishments among this extremely difficult clientele. These accomplishments are due to dedicated performance by DFY program staffs who daily handle some of the most difficult cases in the country.

4. Issues Related to Management Improvement

The general thrust of the management aspects of the audit was that DFY progress in managerial improvement was interpreted by your auditors as a retreat from an earlier agency position on regionalization. We indicate in our response that we continually revise and improve management of this agency in response to a long pattern of changes in mission. A reasonable time lag is to be expected following any radical mission change. Your study spanned the early period of our organizational response to the Juvenile Offender laws -- one of the most radical points of departure for this agency's mission since its inception.

Other than matters related to time lag in organizational response, we note that our approach to regionalization is to determine which matters should best be left to regional management and which issues require central direction. This matrix approach to field management should be measured not only on the degree to which it regionalizes functions, but rather which functions are appropriately regionalized and which get uniform system-wide execution.

To carry out this dual approach to management, we have enhanced many functions in regional administration, while simultaneously focusing on uniform standards and policies for key functions throughout the agency.

5. Summary of Agency Response

We have indicated in our detailed response that many issues raised by the audits should prove constructive in directing agency attention to these matters. However, many of the positive benefits of the audits are vitiated due to the unsupported and erroneous conclusions regarding the supposed similarity of clients, programs and recidivism.

We have attached three sets of forms and descriptions which address some of the key issues raised in your two volume audit. These are:

1. The Intake Assessment package;
2. Problem Oriented Service Planning (POSP), and
3. Rehabilitative Services -- Program Level Summary.

The Intake Assessment package here appended demonstrates the degree of detail to which intake workers investigate and classify cases. More than 60 different items of current and past background are gathered in an interview and document process in order to guide placement. When LCER staff reviewed cases in the impact study, this system had recently been put into effect, with an acknowledged degree of uneven coverage. In recent times, most of

these reporting defects have been completely cleared up, giving workers a keen sense of the varied differences and needs among incoming cases. The LCER impact study seemed to show that similar cases were placed across different types of programs. When all the accompanying Intake Assessment data is added, it is clear that cases are placed differently because they are, in fact, quite different.

Problem Oriented Service Plan is a device used at this agency which we adapted from a medical model in the State of Vermont. This allows us to document our intentions for service with respect to each case and to review our progress toward making those stated goals on an interim as well as final basis. Placement and transfers are highly related to the expressed needs and progress of cases as recorded in POSP.

Program Level Summary is attached here to demonstrate that there is, in fact, a differentiation of programs among the various DFY residential programs and that the differences are programmatic as well as security. This agency intends to continue to differentiate among programs, concentrating scarce resources in selected facilities which would be used by clients with demonstrated needs. While we agree that more program description and differentiation is necessary among DFY residential programs, we also take issue with the statement that there is no description at all, other than degrees of security. The attached program level description demonstrates those differences in program and in clientele for whom the various programs are intended.

As discussed in the response volumes, we generally agree and find helpful the many program observations, and have taken steps to continue investigations and planning around several of the key issues identified in your audit. Some of these issues are: monitoring, community based programs, development of specific counseling modalities, and the development of explicit and unambiguous relations between central management and the field regions. Your observations in these areas were generally accurate, although we believe that your overlying concern with similarity of clients and programs was excessive.

We appreciate the extremely diligent efforts of your staff and will continue to cooperate with the Legislative Commission in an attempt to improve services to youth throughout New York State.

Sincerely,

Frank A. Hall
Director

Enc.

cc: Mark Lawton, Division of the Budget
Frank Jasmine, Governor's Office

APPENDIX E
LCER RESPONSE TO THE DIVISION FOR YOUTH

DFY's response to the program audit and this research report raises issues related primarily to methodology. As an introduction to this material, two points should be made. First, some methodological "problems" are inevitable in a recidivism study since the researcher must deal with an environment where there are problems not present in a clinical setting. DFY presents what it considers to be methodological problems which flaw the study. However, what DFY perceives as methodological problems generally are differences in research approaches that were prompted by the nature of the questions LCER sought to resolve Furthermore, despite the existence of a DFY research unit DFY has produced no recidivism studies which go beyond the work undertaken by LCER or which controlled for the outcomes used by LCER.

Introduction and Background

In reference to LCER's material presented in Chapter I, DFY suggests that there is a greater propensity for youths placed in non-community based facilities to return to criminal behavior after leaving DFY than for youths placed in community based facilities. However, there is no basis for analyzing outcomes with the information presented in Chapter I. Implicit in DFY's assumption is that youths have been appropriately placed by DFY and that there are important distinctions in the programs that produce different outcomes. DFY asserts that LCER's data show that the "high risk" non-community based youths have had comparable outcomes (criminal, educational and employment) as those "lower risk" youths placed in community based facilities. However, DFY has misstated LCER's data and analysis.

LCER did not compare the two cohorts as two homogeneous groupings. LCER compared youths with different types of DFY program exposure who had similar background characteristics. The characteristics used in LCER's analysis were selected from DFY's own data base consisting of 89 background variables--the same variables that DFY claims are important determinants in placing a youth. The characteristics used by LCER were those that were found to be significantly related to outcome measures. LCER compared the outcomes for youths with similar degrees of risk and different program experiences (defined by percent of time in community based facilities). DFY's alternative interpretation of the data is not accurate.

DFY also charges that missing data distort the Chapter I analysis. However, the only relevance of missing data is for the analysis conducted in Chapter III. Chapter I contains no comparative analysis, but, rather, as stated in the Chapter, "provides background information concerning the study methodology, characteristics of youths included in the study and general measures of youths' post-program experience."

Two points are worth making. DFY did not comment on the overall recidivism rate--51.8 percent arrested and 30.4 percent convicted. This rate is "average" when compared to other states where recidivism data were available. Furthermore, the issue of missing data applies only to the post-DFY education and employment experiences of youths. The data for the other variables used for the Chapter III analysis are complete.

Chapter II

DFY indicates that there are methodological problems in the studies reviewed by LCER and discussed in Chapter II. It is important to underscore the fact that DFY has

not come forth with research data showing different results from those studies. Also, DFY overlooked its own study, reviewed in Chapter II, which came to conclusions similar to those arrived at by LCER. When a number of studies arrive at the same general conclusions, there is a preponderance of evidence that cannot be ignored--as DFY has done. Regardless of DFY's concerns regarding methodology, the conclusions of the studies reviewed in Chapter II cannot be dismissed out of hand by DFY.

Chapter III

Basically DFY dismisses LCER's analysis and conclusions in Chapter III for the following reasons:

--Missing data,

--Failure to adequately conceptualize DFY's program,

--Failure to account for length of time in DFY programs, and

--Failure to provide meaningful distinctions among youths based on background characteristics.

Missing Data

As noted above, the issue of missing data applies only to two of LCER's outcome measures--education and employment period. The issue is not relevant to the measures of recidivism--including total arrests, total convictions and most serious arrest. The missing data, therefore, do not have an adverse impact on the study. Youths are placed in DFY primarily because of criminal and/or behavioral problems. Consequently, the issue of recidivism (post-DFY criminal experiences) is of paramount importance. While the issues of education and employment may be related to recidivism and are legitimate outcome measures, they must be considered subsidiary measures of program effectiveness. However, LCER is not prepared to dismiss the conclusions concerning education and employment outcomes as readily as does DFY. Overall, data were available concerning education (high school diploma or GED) for 64.2 percent of the two cohorts combined; and data were available on the employment period for 51.6 percent of the combined cohorts. For a population of this nature, and considering the length of time elapsed from the placement sampled--July 1978 to June 1979--this is not an inconsequential overall response rate. Furthermore, DFY's reservations concerning potential bias (the missing data were weighted in favor of the non-community based group with the following response rates--Education: Non-community based, 72.9 percent; Community based, 46 percent; Employment period: Non-community based, 56.2 percent; Community based, 42 percent) is unfounded. LCER's analysis showed no significant bias due to the differences in these response rates.

Program Conceptualization

DFY faults LCER's "simplistic conceptualization" of DFY's program model since explicit movement patterns were not identified and included in the study. Movement patterns of youths within DFY are more random than systematic and take place for any number of reasons, including bed space availability. Unfortunately, DFY has no guidelines for a youth's movement as part of an overall program design. Consequently if there is

failure of adequate conceptualization, it is on the part of DFY since a movement system must be conceptualized and implemented before it can be studied. LCER conceptualized the system on the bases of meaningful program distinctions--non-community based and community based facilities and the proportion of time spent in each. DFY's efforts (over the past two years) to conceptualize movement patterns within a rational classification scheme have not been successful. Consequently, such a test cannot be applied to LCER's study.

Length of Time in Program

DFY argues that LCER was not concerned with length of time in programs. Table C-3 shows that LCER tested this variable to determine its relationship to the outcome measures used in the study. Such tests of statistical significance showed a relationship only to the employment period outcome measure. Consequently, this variable was not used in the study.

Background Characteristics

DFY's objections to LCER's comparisons of youths are based on the assertion that LCER's classifications are too broad, e.g., classifying youths as misdemeanants and felons does not reflect the seriousness of the offense, and that there are significant differences among youths placed in non-community and community based facilities.

The classifications used by LCER are appropriate. DFY does not clarify its position related to the use of misdemeanors and felonies by showing how to classify the seriousness of the offense. As DFY notes in its Volume I response, "The Code (New York State Penal) contains more than 380 felonies, misdemeanors and violations, ranging from littering to felony murder." What standards should be used to determine whether rape is a more serious offense than, for example, armed robbery? And, even after such discrete classifications have been ranked and applied, the number of units in each cell would have been so small as to make any analysis of the data meaningless.

With respect to other background characteristics used by DFY in making placement decisions, LCER took all such characteristics into account in analyzing the 89 variables maintained on DFY's analysis file. This analysis was used to determine which background characteristics were statistically significantly related to outcome measures used by LCER. This procedure took into account all of the factors allegedly used by DFY in making placement decisions for youths.

The test of appropriate placements, and of DFY's program intervention, is post-program experiences for youths. Using this test LCER's conclusion stands--except for males with prior felonies, placement in a DFY community or non-community based facility does not affect a youth's post-DFY program experience relative to the outcome measures used by LCER in this study.

Note: DFY's response and LCER's comments are available for review at LCER's office.

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PROGRAM AUDITS OF THE
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Manpower Training in New York State, February 16, 1971.*

Narcotic Drug Control in New York State, April 7, 1971.*

Fish and Wildlife Research in New York State, June 24, 1971.

Marital Conciliation in New York State Supreme Court, August 16, 1971

Construction of Dormitories and Other University Facilities, December 1, 1971.

Office Space for New York State, January 17, 1972.

State Supplied Housing for Employees, February 11, 1972.

Middle Income Subsidized Housing in New York State, February 29, 1972.

New York State Criminal Justice Information System, March 17, 1972.

New York State Division For Youth Programs, April 21, 1972.

Snow and Ice Control in New York State, May 31, 1972.

Urban Education Evaluation Reports for the Legislature, June 30, 1972.

The Role of the Design and Construction Group in the New York State, Construction Program, July 7, 1972.

Consumer Food Health Protection Services, August 17, 1972.

Milk Consumer Protection Programs, September 15, 1972.

State University Construction Fund Program, October 5, 1972.*

Surplus and Unused Land in New York State, January 15, 1973.

Evaluation of Two Year Public College Trends, 1966-1971, April 2, 1973.

Educational Television in New York State, July 6, 1973.

Construction of Mental Hygiene Facilities, October 3, 1973.

Community Mental Health Services, October 10, 1973.

The Acquisition and Construction of Drug Abuse Treatment Facilities, January 18, 1974.

State University Health Science Programs, January 24, 1974.

Day Care of Children, February 14, 1974.

State Aid to Libraries, March 4, 1974.

Health Insurance For Government Employees, May 30, 1974.

Civil Service Recruitment of State Professional Personnel, June 17, 1974.

Retail Services Within State Agencies, September 10, 1974.

Nuclear Development and Radiation Control, October 1, 1974.

College for the Disadvantaged, October 15, 1974.

Driver Licensing and Control Programs, October 29, 1974.

State Historic Preservation Programs, November 1, 1974.

Industrial Development in New York State, November 25, 1974.

Programs for the Aged, March 31, 1975.

New York State Fair, April 15, 1975.

New York State Parkways, April 21, 1975.

Tri-State Regional Planning Commission Programs, May 5, 1975.

Foster Care For Children, May 29, 1975.

Disadvantaged Students in Public Two-Year Colleges, July 25, 1975.

Human Rights Programs in New York State, August 18, 1975.

Patients Released From State Psychiatric Centers, August 29, 1975.*

Financial Aid to Crime Victims, October 31, 1975.

Persons Released From State Developmental Centers, December 18, 1975.

New York State Job Placement Programs, December 30, 1975.

Pre-Kindergarten Programs, December 31, 1975.*

DOT Real Estate Program, April 15, 1976.

Solid Waste Management in New York State, May 20, 1976.

Boards of Cooperative Educational Services Programs, June 28, 1976.

Boards of Cooperative Educational Services Finances, June 30, 1976.

Workmen's Compensation Program for State Employees, July 30, 1976.*

Public Pension Fund Regulation, October 29, 1976.

Computers in New York State Government, December 1, 1976.

Health Planning in New York State, January 3, 1977.*

The Optional Service Charge Law, March 11, 1977.

Immunization of Children, May 27, 1977.

State Parks and Recreation Program, October 11, 1977.

State Travel Costs, December 15, 1977.

Venereal Disease Control, December 16, 1977.

State Environmental Permits, December 19, 1977.

Pupil Transportation Programs, January 30, 1978.*

Housing Maintenance Code Enforcement in New York City, March 31, 1978.

Vacation Credit Exchange, June 16, 1978.

Adirondack Park Planning and Regulation, July 31, 1978.

School Food Programs, August 7, 1978.

SUNY Developing and Nontraditional Colleges, September 26, 1978.

Newborn Metabolic Screening Program, October 31, 1978.

Fiscal Effect of State School Mandates, December 20, 1978.

School District Budget Voting and Contingency Budgeting, December 26, 1978.

State Aid for Operating Sewage Treatment Plants, April 16, 1979.

Crime Victims Compensation Program, April 23, 1979.

Drinking Driver Program, May 15, 1979.

Unemployment Insurance for State Employees, July 20, 1979.

Work Programs for Welfare Recipients, August 3, 1979.

CETA Programs in New York State, August 24, 1979.

Parole Resource Centers Program, August 31, 1979.

Local Government Use of State Contracts, October 15, 1979.

Use of State Adult Psychiatric Centers, February 29, 1980.

National Guard Strength and Armories, March 17, 1980.

School District Committees on the Handicapped, April 15, 1980.

Delinquency Prevention and Youth Development Programs, May 2, 1980.

Energy Use in State Facilities, June 11, 1980.

Occupational Education in Secondary Schools, July 8, 1980.

Use of State Developmental Centers, November 6, 1980.

Energy Research and Development Programs, December 24, 1980.

State Subsidized Low Rent Public Housing, December 31, 1980.

Taxpayer Services Program, March 9, 1981.

Title XX Social Services, March 13, 1981.

State Prison Inmate Health Services, June 19, 1981.

Runaway and Homeless Youth, July 15, 1981

State Mandates to Counties, August 14, 1981.

Control of the State Telephone System, August 21, 1981.

Hospital and Nursing Homes Management Fund, October 5, 1981.

Methadone Program, December 21, 1981.

Regulation of Automotive Repair Shops, December 24, 1981.

School District Cash Management, December 29, 1981.

Pupils With Special Educational Needs, April 30, 1982.

State Division of Probation Programs, June 10, 1982.

State Physician Shortage-Maldistribution Programs, July, 16, 1982

Commission on Cable Television, September 15, 1982

Management of Youth Rehabilitation Programs, October 29, 1982

Impact of Youth Rehabilitation Programs, October 29, 1982

*Out of print; loan copies available upon request.

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